

JERUSALEM FROM THE DAMASCUS GATE

From the etching by Fred Richards

A
Journey to Jerusalem

by

ST. JOHN ERVINE

POST - CHECKED



LONDON:

HAMISH HAMILTON

90 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.1

First Published - - *November 1*
Second Impression - - *November 1*

Acc. No.	11745
Class I.	G. 4.
Book No.	2

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PRINTED IN GUERNSEY, C.I., BRITISH

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A JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

I

THE beginning looked bad. I had heard terrifying stories of cruises from friends who had taken part in them, and was in no mood to spend any of my time in the company of tipsy young women, in beach pyjamas, and elderly sots who went down to the sea in ships, not for the pleasure of voyaging, but because liquor, being unbonded, can be bought there cheaply and in lavish quantities. Many of the passengers, I was warned, would better be called boosers, rather than cruisers, and horrific tales of drunken flappers being carried to their cabins at midnight by disgusted stewards were poured into my ears. I would meet 'the most awful people! . . .' 'But,' I objected, 'I am not going on a cruise of that kind. This is an Hellenic Club Cruise! . . .' 'Worse and worse,' my friends asserted. 'Nothing but parsons and archaeologists. You'll be lectured to death on the sea, and dragged to death round ruins on land!' 'Well, I'm a bit of a lecturer myself,' I replied, and the warnings trailed off into gloomy mumbles. The depressing clamour revived as the date of my departure approached. I was told that the average age of an Hellenic Club cruiser was eighty-seven, and that the only young woman who had ever accompanied the members to the East had died of acute discouragement. 'You'll find yourself surrounded by people who fought in the Peloponnesian Wars! . . .' I declined to be discouraged, and made my preparations for departure; but on the morning I motored to Plymouth to join the ship, I should not have been unhappy if I had heard that owing to the Italo-Abyssinian War, the cruise had been cancelled. Spring was coming, and my garden was filling with flowers. Jock, my West Highland terrier, and his sons, Jack and Jerry, disapproved of the entire adventure. They disapprove of all my departures, but they particularly disapproved of this one. Jock looked at me with mournful brown

eyes, and as I prepared to leave my house he turned his back on me and declined to show me any affection. The whole house was sniffy with disapproval. 'All this gallivanting about the earth! . . .' The drive to Plymouth was pleasant. 'Do you think you'll see anything better than this?' I was asked. 'I'm not going to see something better: I'm going to see something different!' I said.

I was to spend the night in Plymouth, and embark on the *Laetitia*, commanded by Captain G. K. Baillie, on Monday morning, February 24. The hour of embarkation was early even for early risers, and disgustingly early for me, who hate to leave my bed until the world has been well warmed. There are people who leap lightly from their couches the moment the lark ascends, but I am not one of them. I creep unwillingly to bed, and creep as unwillingly from it. I doubt if anything less than a charge of gelignite would lift me from my couch to greet the dawn, nor would my greeting be accompanied by a cheer. A curse, almost certainly. The theory that all healthy people rise early has no foundation in fact. Old men and women wake much earlier than youths and maidens. My experience in the War was that to rouse the junior subalterns from sleep was almost as difficult as rousing the dead; but the older officers woke early and quickly. The news that I must rise in the dark depressed me. 'This flouncing out of bed at five in the morning ought to be stopped by the Government,' I said in disgruntled tones, as I looked around the room in which the other passengers were gradually assembling. They seemed to be septuagenarians on the point of becoming octogenarians. 'Well, I'm sorry for you,' was whispered in my ear, 'but you *would* go! . . .'

'They're not so bad,' I answered, trying to sound cheerful. 'I didn't say they were bad: I said they were all very old!'

A lady whom I had not seen for a great many years encountered me in a corridor. She was on her way to Spain. 'But won't you be shot there?' I said, for the papers were full of revolutionary news.

'Oh, no,' she replied confidently, 'they know me!'

'Well, that's very satisfactory,' I said to myself, but I wondered if the bullets would know her, too.

Depression settled on me so deeply that I went to bed, but

not to sleep, for I cannot sleep at will, and early retirement does not mean a longer rest for me, but merely that I read in bed instead of out of it. Perhaps, I said to myself, the cruise will be cancelled to-morrow. But it wasn't, and in the morning, which was grey and chilly, I crawled, gummy-eyed, out of bed and gave myself a perfunctory shave. If everybody had to shave at this hour, I thought to myself, what a lot of throats would be cut! There was a congestion of bathers, but as I have no heart for water, warm or cold, at six a.m., I dressed and descended to the hall, now cluttered with luggage, and bought a *Times*, the last I should see for some weeks, unless I was lucky enough to pick up a copy at a port of call. In a properly-run world, a man will be able to obtain *The Times* at breakfast on the day of publication. Until that arrangement has been made, it is useless to talk to me of progress.

In the dining-room, gummy-eyed waiters were trying, not too successfully, to provide food for fifty or sixty gummy-eyed travellers at the same time. I looked round the room, a relic of a more ostentatious age than ours, and caught sight of Mr. H. V. Morton in a corner. I went over to greet him and was introduced to Mrs. Morton. The average age of the cruisers had dropped considerably! . . . The septuagenarians no longer trembled on the brink of octogenarianism: they had become blithe sexagenarians who could, without difficulty, pass for middle-aged. Mr. and Mrs. Morton were going again to Asia Minor to retrace the steps of St. Paul, as they had already, in Palestine, several times traced the steps of Jesus. I wished them well, and returned to my table, readier to eat bacon and eggs than I had been before. My depression, though it continued, was dwindling.

A wet tender took us from the *Hoe* to the *Laetitia*, which was lying in the Sound, and it had that smell which some ships seem never to lose, a smell that suggests interminable nausea, a damp and prolonged smell of vomit. The cold air of the morning penetrated my thick coat and made me shiver a little. I felt as if dampness were seeping into my system and I should never again be dry.

'For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps
Side-strokes that shall pen thy breath up. . . .'

I looked back at our grey England, now growing less and less grey as the sun burnt up the watery sky, and thought to myself how frequently I had consoled myself for my departures by dreaming of my returns. There is only one good reason for leaving England, that one may have the pleasure of coming back to it. My reverie was broken by the discovery that I had forgotten to bring my passport. 'Damn that war for culture,' I said to myself. 'Ever since it began, there's been a plague of prying inspectors, each angrily stamping something or asking impertinent questions!' We have a boundary in Ireland now, lined on either side with officials who must know your business and charge you sums of money for possessing things. The last war in Ireland, I say, will break out on the day the boundary is abolished: a host of displaced inland revenue officers will make war on the rest of the country, fighting for their jobs or their pensions! . . . A hurried consultation ensued to my discovery that I was without a passport, and an arrangement made that it should be brought to me at Toulon where, nine days later, we were to be joined by the greater number of the cruisers. But should the passport fail to arrive, it seemed as if I might have to stay on board the *Laetitia* for the whole of the trip. It might be possible for me to land at places if a declaration were to be made before a consul! . . . My distress was slight. Mr. Micawber was quite right. Something is always sure to turn up. The passport did. It reached me easily at Toulon.

II

I do not know what transmuting power the *Laetitia* may possess, but it seemed to me, soon after I had stepped on board her, that those who had seemed incredibly venerable the previous night in Plymouth, had become rejuvenated. The Mortons had reduced the average age. So had my friend, Mr. W. A. Colegate, last seen about twenty-five years earlier, whom I now re-met. He was accompanied by his wife and father-in-law, Sir William Worsley, who, at the age of seventy-five, was setting out on his travels as if he were thirty-five. But this I soon discovered was no age at sea. Lord Dunedin was eighty-six, a hearty trencherman, and with only one complaint, about the state of the ballroom floor. There were

others on board as old and active as Lord Dunedin. Sir Henry Lunn himself, who had invited me to come on the cruise, is seventy-seven, but thinks nothing of running round two or three continents in two or three weeks. Two friends from Scotland, Mrs. Burnett Smith, who is world-renowned as Annie S. Swan, and Professor G. S. Duncan, of St. Andrews University, who is an authority on St. Paul, were already on board. I began to perk up. This cruising was not so bad as it had seemed likely to be. If only the Bay of Biscay would behave as well as it had the last time I had crossed it, I might enjoy myself enormously. There was a friendly atmosphere on the ship. Officers and crew seemed glad to see passengers. They did not glare at them as if, inwardly, they were saying, 'We've got to put up with you for about six weeks, and, by God, we will!' They went efficiently and cheerfully about their duties, but were never too busy to behave like friends and brothers. You've come out to enjoy yourselves, and enjoy yourselves you shall, you . . . nice people, their cheerful faces seemed to say as we came aboard and sought our cabins and prepared to settle in.

III

The Bay was unkind, but less unkind than we were to find the Gulf of Lyons several days later. (Here I must display a piece of information I learnt some weeks after I had been tossed on the Gulf. It is *not* the Gulf of Lyons: it is the Gulf of Lions, though some people say that *that* is wrong too, and that the correct name is the Gulf of the Lion (*Golfe du Lion*¹). The weather remained as grey during our voyage across the Bay as it had been in Plymouth, but it began to brighten off the coast of Portugal, though the sea continued to be rough and the ship rolled enough to make walking about the decks difficult for me. So I stayed in bed, eating little, and read Winifred Holtby's novel, *South Riding*, of which her mother had sent me an early copy, because I should be absent from England on the day of its publication. It is the book I begged Winifred to write. I could not abide the clever-clever, politically satirical stuff on which she wasted her fine intellect, and would gladly

¹ It is called the Gulf of Lions in Philips' *New Imperial Atlas*, but Larousse, *The Times' Atlas*, and a chart call it the Gulf of the Lion (*Golfe du Lion*).

have given a wilderness of *Mandoa*, *Mandoas* for one chapter of *South Riding*. When she dedicated *The Astonishing Island* to me because I had 'asked for it', but not in my sense of that term, I cursed her heartily for spending her talent on such a work when there was a novel of quality about her own county, Yorkshire, waiting to be written. I had accused her, after the publication of *Poor Caroline*, of writing only about unlikeable people, and I begged her to look into her own heart and cultivate her admirations. 'Why are you, who should be a great novelist, content to be a Chelsea pamphleteer?' I demanded when she sent me *Mandoa*, *Mandoa!* 'I'm in London till Christmas, journalising hard,' she replied:

'But after Christmas I go to a hole or corner in Yorkshire at 2d. a week and write a novel, if the gods are good. I can't get away before that. Many things to hold me here, also much business still to do, and am bad at writing novels while running round with lawyers, etc. I should be able to. I used to be able to work at night when things got quiet, but now I can't, and the only thing I can do is to go away. But I can't promise, even to please you, to leave pamphleteering alone. It's in my blood. It's meat and drink to me. And the more I sit in Yorkshire and listen to my farmer uncles talking (I've listened for some thirty years) the more I realise that though the old man will go on harrowing sods while dynasties pass . . .'

but 'clods' was Hardy's word, not 'sods':

... 'yet the kind of harrow he uses, the question of who owns it, how much he is paid for doing it, whether he works happily or unhappily, whether his son is growing up to take his place or, fed up with a country which offers no prospects, has gone into the town to ride round streets with a Stop Me and Buy One, depends upon a great many considerations which have never entered the old man's head. You'll probably hate my book. But if you do, at least know that even when I annoy you, I love you. And if I wrote a book simply to please one other person, however nice or wise or worth while pleasing, instead of writing the book I feel I have to write, it wouldn't be much of a book, would it? Walked over a lovely common last Saturday outside Beverley. All green and grey and smelling of centuries' old decay. But fools would walk after me hitting beastly little balls. I hate golf. No other game spoils so much good country walking. Now if you'd crusade about golfers instead of pamphleteers! . . .'

South Riding is the novel to which she refers in this letter. How

she could ever have supposed that I would hate it I cannot imagine. It is a fine book that would have been better if she could have lived to revise it in a few places. When I remember that generous, golden-haired girl, whose beautiful blue eyes gleamed in unquenchable kindness on everyone she met — she would not have harmed even a golfer! — I feel a great rage rising in me against all those 'advanced' and 'progressive' people who dragged her, though she was dying of a most painful disease, to their damned committee meetings and lecture halls, spending without thrift the gold of her genius. There are passages in *South Riding* which I cannot read without deep emotion, passages in which she, who never whimpered or complained, cries out in fiction at the agony she bore with such fortitude in fact. . . . Well, that's enough. She's dead and buried, but I bless heaven she left us proof of her genius.

IV

We reached Cadiz on Thursday, having sailed from Plymouth on Monday. Canon W. A. Wigram, who knows the Mediterranean, and especially the eastern end, exceedingly well, lectured to us twice on Wednesday, in the afternoon on Tangier and in the evening on Cadiz, and very good lectures they were. He has a gift for giving information in an entertaining manner. My feeling for guides, as the reader will learn in the course of these notes, is not affectionate; but Canon Wigram, they must understand, is excluded from all condemnation. He knows his job, and does it well.

The sea continued to be sufficiently choppy to make landing in launches an ordeal for any person who is not agile on his legs. The tossing boats, lapsing alarmingly from the gangway with the beat of the tide, daunted me, and I did not go ashore. I had begun to read Mr. H. V. Morton's *In the Steps of the Master*, which was lent to me by Mrs. Annie S. Swan, and I found it immensely interesting. Mr. Morton is a superb reporter. I do not mean that he can write an account of a street accident or an inquest or a football match very well. I mean that he has an exceptionally vivid power of recording events and describing places so that the most diverse people can share his vision of them. I have never heard of any man in Fleet Street who can equal him in descriptive

reporting. There is no one who can excel him. *In the Steps of the Master* makes Palestine visual to the reader, imprints the place ineffaceably on his mind. To be able to describe a country so clearly that those who have never seen it feel familiar with it, is to be a superb reporter. And that is what Mr. Morton is. The popularity of his book is great, but not astonishing. Almost everybody on the *Laetitia* had read it at least once. It absorbed me so much that I forgot about Cadiz for the greater part of the morning, nor did I remember it until the afternoon when I looked about the bay round whose shores it spreads.

It is a white city, with tall buildings piled like pinnacles on the front, and it lies in the middle of a lovely, almost land-locked bay. It is bare and flat at one end, but thick with trees, that give it an El Greco look, at the other: dark green, scrubby-looking trees, almost black in appearance, some of which grow above light yellow sandy cliffs. The morning had been misty, but as the sun strengthened, mountains showed themselves behind the city, and one of them was covered with snow. Mrs. Morton, when I remarked on the El Greco look of the hills, informed me that he had probably painted some of his pictures in Cadiz. At all events, we decided to believe that he had. The town appears dignified and handsome from the sea, having none of the unsightliness that oppresses the beholder of an English port. There are, of course, many reasons why that should be so. Cadiz has not the shipping nor the industry that Southampton and Belfast have, yet our grandfathers, if they had had some regard for comeliness, could have put a good appearance on those cities and made them as handsome as Cadiz. The approach to my native city, Belfast, is beautiful. The Lough is a fine stretch of wide water, with the mountains of Antrim reaching darkly up to the north, and the low hills of Down rolling away to the south. A people who respected beauty could not have failed to make their city keep in harmony with its surroundings.

The inhabitants of what are called backward countries must now be thankful for their fathers' unprogressive character. The wrongs that the industrial system might have done them have been missed, and they, when they begin to 'develop', can at least avoid the disfigurement of our industrial areas.

There is a lady, known to me, who has stoutly resisted every effort to make her agree to 'develop' her estate, and very heartily she has been cursed in 'progressive' circles as a reactionary and a troglodyte because she will not allow speculative builders to scrabble her lovely hills with bungalowoid growths. If the 'progressives' could have their way with her land, it would be cut up into desirable building estates, and the hills which now delight every eye, lovely in winter with brown bracken, lovely in spring with green bracken, on their summit, and crops of hay and clover and roots at their feet, and never the same in look two days together, would be smothered under a mass of ugly masonry and mortar. I hope she will live a long time, resisting to her last breath the horde of ravening progressives who would butcher her hills to make a speculative builder's holiday. Generations will rise up to call her blessed because she was a reactionary and stood obstinately in the way of progress. For the hills she has saved from the developer's hands will be glorious for ever, but the developer's houses would, if they were built, affront the spirit.

There are people who would like to see Peacehavens everywhere. I do not envy them when, on the Last Day, they come into the presence of their Maker to tell Him what they have done with His earth.

A number of our passengers disembarked at Cadiz, to motor to Seville, Cordova and Granada. They rejoined us at Malaga. Other passengers went ashore for the day, some of them going to Jerez de la Frontera to visit the Cartuja Monastery and one of the wine cellars, full of sherry, at Jerez. As the dusk descended on Cadiz, the sea became rougher and the last passengers to leave the town had a trying time in re-embarking; but they were brought aboard in safety and were able to find entertainment in their trouble. An old lady, Mrs. Eyre Chatterton, the wife of a bishop, who looked fragile, was one of these passengers, and I was filled with admiration for her pluck. She went everywhere and did everything. No wave was high enough to daunt her, nor any landing too difficult. She climbed all that was climbable, though her age cannot have been less than seventy and may have been more.

Lady Margaret Watney, beside whom I sat at dinner on the night we left Cadiz, told me she had sent her maid ashore to

see the sights. 'I gave her ten shillings to spend. She wouldn't take any more. She's like that. Once when Lord Grey came to stay with us and was going into Oxford, he returned to say he had no money, so she gave him ten shillings and said that was as much as anyone needed in a day!' Sir Henry Lunn, remembering that I had written *God's Soldier*, asked me if I had heard this story of General William Booth. An Anglican clergyman, who had joined The Salvation Army, complained that it had no sacraments. 'But when I die,' he said to Booth, 'what shall I say when I'm asked why we have no sacraments?' 'You can tell God General Booth doesn't think they are necessary,' the old man answered. I remember telling an eminent ecclesiastic that Booth had refused to have any sacraments in his Army on the ground that they create discord, and the eminent ecclesiastic replied, 'He was quite right. I sometimes think we'd be better without them!'

As we drew away from Cadiz, Mrs. Annie S. Swan told my fortune by cards. I have an infantile love of fortune-telling, and bother anybody who can read the cards to tell mine. It was a grand fortune too: a fair and lucky future, with scarcely a hint of trouble in it. I made her promise to tell my fortune again before we left the ship, and she did. It, too, was a grand fortune. The police would not have the heart to prosecute anyone who, even for large sums of money, foretold such gratifying futures as are read from cards by Mrs. Burnett Smith. Indeed, I think the government should endow her to go about the country telling fortunes and, in this way, cheering everybody up.

v

From Cadiz we went to Gibraltar, a short voyage, and, in the morning, I looked out of a porthole and saw the Rock for the first time. I had passed through the Straits before, but only at night, and I had a fear that the Rock might disappoint me. But I was enthralled by it. In that bright sunshine and blue sky, it seemed more magnificent than I had expected it to be. The high rigorous head rose out of the Straits and looked down on Europe and Africa with the proud air of a trusted custodian. The day was mixed, with more sun than shower, and the sea was a lovely colour, a brilliant blue for the

most part, with here and there a tinge of dark gentian blue. I could feel a brisk air coming round a corner of Africa to make our cheeks tingle and our eyes blink, as we descended the long ladder to the launches and were taken ashore, but I was not troubled by the wind, for my eyes and thoughts were all on that great rock which looks like a recumbent, headless lion. It is an odd place for a Briton to visit; half British and half Spanish, and I felt as if I were in English lodgings in a foreign town. The people of Gibraltar, as distinct from the British soldiers and officials, seem to have had all the blood of Southern Europe and Northern Africa poured into their bodies. The result is not physically beautiful. A young man who stood outside a shop door had bright golden crimped hair, and looked like a Greek god who had run to Jewish seed. There seemed to be many young men with crimped hair at shop doors. Their grandmothers, I felt certain, had played fast and loose with Israelites. The town was busy with traffic, yet leisurely too. No one seemed so pressed for time that he could not spare a few minutes to talk to a friend. The whole bright day was before one. What was a minute or two when a friend was passing? I like to loiter in streets, to lean against a wall and watch the crowd go by, but I could not indulge my desire that day, but must go motoring up the Rock as far as one might, to look down on the streets and across the sea and at the Moorish Castle, a very ancient ruin, but of what date I did not inquire, nor do I care; for it is an ugly castle, and I should not break my heart if it were to fall down. The preservation of ancient monuments, merely because they are ancient monuments, excites no enthusiasm in me, nor have I any wish to dig up bottles and jars of other times because they are very old. Every time I pass a rubbish dump in England, and observe old tins being buried in it, I sneer at posterity which will, I feel sure, squander a mint of money in digging up our refuse to be exhibited in museums as examples of Early Twentieth Century glass and metal work. Young gentlemen will acquire an expensive education at Oxford or Cambridge so that they may excavate our remains; and there will be archaeological squabbles over jam pots, sardine tins, iron bedsteads and soda-water bottles! . . .

I sat in the sunshine while my companions entered the Moorish Castle, and when they had come out again, I went off

to Europa Point, at which the Atlantic meets the Mediterranean and the spectator can see the beginning of Africa. The ground at Europa Point was covered with wild-flowers that looked to me like wild crocuses, but a lady said she thought they were gentians. I did not agree with her, but am not expert in gardening and dare not contradict anybody who dissents from my belief. It is my misfortune, when I take people round my garden in Devon, never to be asked the names of the flowers I know, but only to be asked the names of those that I cannot remember or have never known. I still think the flowers I saw at Europa Point were wild crocuses, but that is obstinacy, not botany.

Soldiers were drilling on a parade-ground near the Point, and I should like to have spent half an hour in watching them, for soldiers are good to watch; but the cars were preparing to move to the other end of the Rock, and I had to go with them to a little Genoese village built on the shores of Catalan Bay. Here, a long time ago, a group of Genoese settled, and here their descendants remain, keeping themselves to themselves and retaining the customs of their ancestors. They govern themselves through a mayor, and maintain a life which has almost no relation to the rest of the life on the Rock. If a man in this Genoese village marries a girl from outside it, he may bring her to live in the village, but if a Genoese girl marries an 'alien' man, she must clear out of Catalan Bay and go to live among the 'foreigners' a mile or less away. We were shown a great water catchment near this village, but I have no head for reservoirs, and cannot remember whether it is gallons or floods they hold.

On our way to Catalan Bay we had passed through gardens full of arum lilies, which grow here as freely as gilly-flowers in England. It was odd to see, blooming so profusely, a flower which is associated by us chiefly with hot-houses and funerals. Lilies seem to me not to be flowers so much as symbols of something: white lilies, of death, and orange lilies, of Orange Lodges and Unionism. In my boyhood I could see no beauty in an orange lily, though I belonged to an Ulster Unionist family, because its associations were not with gardens, but with party meetings and processions. It was not until, in my middle age, I grew orange lilies in my Devonshire garden that I discovered

how beautiful they are; and I take it unkindly that for the greater part of my life I have been cheated out of affection for these lovely flowers by politicians. If the primrose were not a wild flower it would, I suppose, long ago have lost general regard and have become a sign of dissension.

It is even more dreadful to make any flower the sign of death. Until I saw the arum lilies in Gibraltar, I had accustomed myself to look upon them as artificial flowers, sickly with decay and reminiscent of corpses, but as I drove past the gardens in which they grow so freely, I lost that sense of decomposition, and saw in them lovely white flowers with golden tongues. How badly we have used the arum lily. We were not content to make it a decoration for the charnel house and the tomb, but must, in our affectation of aestheticism, make it the emblem of a ridiculous culture. But that daft day is gone.

There were flowers of every colour in Gibraltar that morning, and hawkers in the streets were selling masses of them, including siberica iris which reminded me of the pool, surrounded by this charming flower, in my garden. But the siberica iris does not unfold its flowers in Devon in February: it keeps them folded fast until the middle of May.

In the afternoon, I drove to Algeciras, crossing the neutral ground between Gibraltar and Spain, and saw Spanish peasants obviously smuggling goods from the Rock, but in such a way that they were not technically breaking the law. There was a great deal of waiting at the frontier by these people, but peasants are accustomed to wait for everything and find it no hardship. The driver of my car was the second best driver in the world, the second most careful driver in the world, and the second of the two drivers who have caused me no fear or alarm. When I asked him if he were a Spaniard, he proudly told me, in a foreign accent, that he was British. The country through which we passed would, I think, have been monotonous had there been no mountains and sea. That must seem a trite remark to make, but it is not as trite as it appears. The scenery is too much of a single sort, and there is an intolerable deal of cactus to the hedges. Cactus is a freak of a plant, almost obscene-looking, and it has no right to be in Europe at all, I was told; it was brought to the shores of the Mediterranean from South America, and now it grows everywhere along that coast.

Whether that be true or not I cannot tell. I saw a lot of its great flat repulsive leaves gathered into a heap, and I wondered if it served any purpose, such as food for cattle or manure or fuel or bedding for beasts, but no one of whom I inquired could tell me, though I put my questions as far east as Asia Minor. The world is full of people who know as little as I do.

But if the country on the way to Algeciras is a little monotonous, it is vividly green, a bright arsenical greenness that is slightly disturbing to the stranger. The green stuff was said to be grass, but it was not what we call grass, nor do I know what kind of herbage it was. I saw no grass, in our sense of the word, from the moment I left England until I landed in France on my way home. But Southern Spain, despite the strong sun, is as green as England. A remarkably lithe and agile pig, so brown that it seemed to be sunburnt, is bred there, and although my driver cursed heartily when a small herd of pigs were driven along the road by a peasant — an illegal act, he assured me — I enjoyed the sight of them scampering speedily about the fields.

My expectation that I would see many beautiful and graceful women in Spain was disappointed on the way to Algeciras. The people, especially the women, were uncommonly ugly and, I imagined, very poor, though they seemed to support their poverty with cheerfulness. The contrast between them and the carabineri who, with rifles slung across their backs, patrolled the roads, was astonishing. The carabineri were young men, well-fed and well-dressed and good-looking. I surmised that they had been brought there from another part of Spain, so different was their appearance from that of the people among whom they served. I did not see one good-looking girl or woman in Gibraltar or on the way to Algeciras, apart from Britons, and my failure to see handsome women in Spain astounded me. Another illusion lost, I said to myself. The women in Gibraltar as well as in that part of Spain dress in a slovenly fashion, nearly all of them walking about in what may be called bedroom-slippers, and wearing dismal dark garments. If they had ever heard of colour, they had evidently decided to hush it up. Their poverty appeared chiefly in the quality of their houses: dreadful, tumbledown shacks that were saved from looking horrible by the sunshine which brightened

them. We make bitter and justifiable complaint of slum dwellings in England, but the worst houses I have seen in our country might almost be called palatial in comparison with those that are commonly seen on the road from Gibraltar to Algeciras. Nowhere on the shores of the Mediterranean did I see a workman's house that could match a Council cottage in Britain. There are workmen's flats in Liverpool that are as fine as the famous workmen's flats in Vienna, and far finer than flats occupied even by comparatively prosperous people in some parts of Eastern Europe.

Before we reached Algeciras, which is a charming holiday place, we stopped at a small town, the name of which I cannot remember, and entered a cathedral with a poor outside and a very tawdry interior. When the Roman Catholic Church descends to vulgarity, it does not stop half-way: it travels the entire distance. I have heard Roman Catholics make a good dialectical defence of this habit, on the plea that religion must be all things to all men, and that it is right and proper to put spiritual truths in a vulgar way to vulgar people who cannot comprehend them in any other form; but there seems to be great danger in the practice of this precept. Those who make vulgar appeals sometimes over-estimate the vulgarity of common men and women. They may also be guilty of the sin of encouraging vulgar minds to remain vulgar or to become more vulgar, reducing the spiritual to the level of the lowest material when they had better try to raise the lowest material to the level of the spiritual. It may also be supposed that in repelling by their vulgar appeals those to whom such appeals are outrageous, they cancel the problematical good they do to vulgar people. It will be observed that I am not defining vulgarity, but merely trying to reply to those who justify what are agreed to be vulgar acts or beliefs.

In this cathedral there was, in a glass case by the high altar, a dressed doll which was said to represent some saint. I do not feel that I was smugly Protestant when I felt instant aversion from this bedizened puppet which would have been discarded by the proprietor of a sixpenny bazaar. God forbid that I shall ever become so imperceptive that I fail to see the spirit behind the figure or to notice the nobility of mood in those who kneel before a tawdry statue. But God forbid, too, that any

man should be content to leave the poor in spirit as poor as he found them. Or poorer than he found them.

The Church of Rome has survived many mischances, and will survive many more. Its history is illuminated by the lives of noble men and women whose devotion to their faith has enriched an impoverished world and filled empty hearts with hope. But it may be said with warrant that those men and women were good in themselves and not good because they were Roman Catholics, a contention that can, of course, be maintained about members of other sects; and it may with equal warrant be said that a rag and bone religion cannot continue to hold the mind and spirit of a world which is, all too slowly, rising out of its intellectual mire. I doubt the spiritual value of a faith founded largely on relics and half-heard traditions. It does not appear to me good in a spiritual sense that a church should be cluttered with thigh bones and knuckles and scraps of cloth which are alleged to have sanctity because they once, so it is said, were part of a holy man or woman's body or were worn by a saint. If we may give religious respect, amounting in a multitude of cases to adoration, to a piece of the True Cross, assuming that the fragment of timber is a piece of the True Cross, may we not also give religious respect to the nails which pierced the hands and feet of Jesus; to the hammer which drove them in; to the hands that held the hammer; to the sword which entered the Saviour's side; to the soldier who drove it into his side¹; to the spittle which was spat in his face by the frantic crowd that saw him staggering, half dead from his brutal scourging, up the Via Dolorosa to Calvary; to those who condemned him; to Pontius Pilate who weakly gave him up to the wrath of the High Priest and the rabble; to Judas Iscariot who betrayed him with a kiss! . . . If his death was ordained, all these people and these material things have importance in the work of redemption and may as justly be reverenced or adored as relics of the True Cross and bits of the Virgin Mary's robe or a saint's shin. The Abyssinians, indeed, with the logic of a

¹ The Greeks *have* canonised him. He was a one-eyed Roman soldier, called Longinus, and it is said that as he drove his spear into the Saviour's side, water and blood spurted into his blind eye and he recovered his sight. 'He thereupon repented,' says Baedeker, 'and became a Christian.' One of the apses in the Greek Cathedral in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is called the Chapel of St. Longinus.

simple race have canonised Pontius Pilate, who was, if we accept the theory of a divinely ordained redemptive death, an instrument in the salvation of mankind. But they have also canonised his wife, Claudia Procula, as the Greek Church has, who, had her husband paid heed to her warning, would have released Jesus and thus, on that theory, have prevented the redemption!

I came out of the cathedral in a mixture of moods. There is much in the Roman Catholic Church which profoundly moves me, but there is more which fills me with aversion; nor can I discover what the Church gains by its retention of beliefs and customs which add nothing to religion and excite derision in those who do not hold the Roman Catholic faith. The late Dean of Winchester, Dr. W. H. Hutton, said of Pusey in *The Future of the Church of England*, 'Everything Catholic that Roman theologians taught he independently accepted; but what was Roman and not Universal found hardly an entrance, by the tiniest loophole, into his beliefs.' The religious value of the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and the Infallibility of the Pope, doctrines which are Roman, but not Universal, to those who accept them, seems to me exactly nil; and these two, out of several inessential doctrines, abolish all hope there may be of religious unity. A vast multitude of men and women sincerely fail to find these doctrines of the slightest spiritual service, yet belief in them is a condition of communion with Rome. Men of undoubted distinction and piety, such as Dr. Döllinger, were excommunicated for their refusal to receive the doctrine, enunciated in singular circumstances¹, that the Pope is infallible. Was the spiritual gain, if any, to the Church, as a result of this doctrine, worth the excommunication of Döllinger and the spiritual scandal which it caused, not only among the members of other churches, but among the members of the Church of Rome itself? My mind is baffled by the fact that a Church which has accumulated so much wisdom and devotion should obstinately maintain beliefs which defeat all understanding and are

¹ Dr. L. E. Elliott-Binns, in *Religion in the Victorian Era*, reminds his readers that 'Three opposition bishops, those of Cologne, Paris, and Cambrai, representing between them five million Catholics, had but three votes; while the Papal States, with a population of less than a million, had sixty-two bishops present to swell the affirming vote.'

demonstrably absurd when they are not actually vicious. There is a way which leads to Francis Xavier, and a way which leads to Pio Nono. The Church of Rome, alas, has too often followed the second.

VI

We came away from the Cathedral, and were immediately pestered for pennies by small boys, some of whom pointed to their bare legs in an attempt to stir our pity. Mine was not stirred. It is lamentable that infants should be allowed, even incited, by their parents to cadge from strangers. These begging boys had not the excuse of poverty for their behaviour, though poverty is rife in Spain. They cadged irrespective of their condition. We were to find this whining for alms increasing in volume as we went east, and becoming steadily more professional, less and less related to need. There is much nonsense talked about charity, nonsense which encourages the wastrel and the weak to sponge on the good nature of the thrifty and the strong. It is this nonsense which annuls true charity and allows the charitable to be exploited by the unscrupulous and lazy. To feed the hungry and heal, if one can, the sick is an obligation from which no decent man or woman will try to escape, but neither will any self-respecting person permit himself to be exploited by rogues and rascals who try to work on his humanity. To train children to become professional cadgers is one of the ultimate sins.

It was only boys who cadged in this little Spanish town. I did not see a single girl approach a member of our party, but I have since been told by other travellers in Spain that there is no sex-barrier in begging, and that Spanish girls can cadge as persistently as Spanish boys.

In this town I saw my first and only bull ring, a down-at-heel place which looked like a neglected slaughter-house. It holds 7,000 people and is used now more as an open-air cinema than as a bull ring; for bull fighting, I was told, is an expensive entertainment and is losing its popularity, partly for that reason, but chiefly because football is ousting it from favour. I am not one of those people who condemn cruelty in other races while remaining oblivious or tolerant of cruelty in their own. The

Latin races may be more sadistic than Northern European races, although that is an argument which still requires to be proved. Stories of barbarity practised on animals in Latin countries are horrifying to people who have been brought up in a gentler tradition, and I hope I am as prompt as any man to protest against brutality wherever I see it. My contempt for the he-men who think it is such fun to see a half-starved horse disembowelled by a bull, is illimitable. If any creature's intestines must be spilt in the arena, I prefer that theirs, rather than some blindfolded, driven horse's should; nor would I shed any tears if some of them were to take a fatal toss from a bull. If goring must be endured, I see no reason against their being gored.

But I think it is better that each nation should remove the mote from its own eye before it tries to remove the beam from its neighbour's; and I am not disposed to condemn a Spaniard for barbarity to bulls and horses while Englishmen continue to be barbarous to stags and foxes. The existence of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals proves that many Britons are kind to beasts: it also proves that many Britons are not. To feel offended at the cruelty we do not ourselves practise is altogether too easy. I have known people — I am, alas, one of them — who would not hurt a fly, but are ready on the least provocation to wound with their tongues. Our ideas about cruelty are often inconsistent and woolly. I cannot bring myself to hit my dogs or my cat even when they deserve to be hit, but I can kill a slug without compunction. Collectors are as uncompassionate in following their craze as any men can be, and ruthlessly destroy life to obtain 'specimens'. Once, in my young manhood, I wounded a girl with my tongue because I caught her chasing butterflies which, when she had caught them, she thrust into a bottle containing a deadly acid. That child had been taught by her teachers to take an interest in butterflies, and the form her interest took was the pursuit of a pretty creature so that she might asphyxiate it in a bottle filled with poisonous fumes.

A man must settle for himself what is to be his attitude towards other men who behave barbarously, though I will not allow myself to be included among those who make

that belief an excuse for leaving brutality unrebuked; but I think we will do better to purge ourselves of cruelty before we begin to purge others. When I am asked to preserve my sense of proportion and to detect the great difference there is between the spectacle of a starved and decrepit horse being gored by a bull, so that its entrails trail like twisted ribbons on the floor, and the spectacle of hounds tearing a live fox to pieces, my first impulse is to cry out against the hypocrisy which fortifies our feelings with the assurance that the cruelty we practise is not really cruelty, or is, at all events, less cruel than that of superstitious and brutal Spaniards. I do not suppose any Spaniard has ever asserted that the horse likes to be disembowelled by the bull, or that the bull enjoys being tormented by the matador, but there are Englishmen, even eminent ecclesiastics, who will bare-facedly assert that the fox likes to be chased and gets a great deal of quiet fun out of being rent alive. My sense of proportion collapses when I hear of a perfect gentleman, half smothered in old school ties, dragging a screaming stag from the Bristol Channel, so that the exhausted and frantic creature's throat may be cut in the presence of the nobility and gentry of Somerset. I am not ready to cry shame on the gentlemen of Spain who take their matilla-ed ladies to see horses gored by bulls, and bulls stabbed to death by toreadors, when no shame is cried on my countrymen for the cruelty they commit. Macaulay was a fool, and not for the first time, when he jeered at the puritan who objected to bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator. Is he a desirable man who takes pleasure in any creature's suffering? The puritan was right in his objection. The pain the bear endured might soon end, but the wound in the soul suffered by those who enjoyed the bear's pain might be everlasting.

We were to have landed at Ceuta, but Tangier was chosen instead because, so we were told, Ceuta was not then a safe place to visit. Tangier, however, was a disappointment. The

weather in the morning was showery and dull, and landing could be made only in launches on a sea that was less still than is convenient to me. Excursions had been cancelled because the weather was expected to worsen, and re-embarkation might be hard. The lesson of Cadiz was well remembered. I saw nothing of Tangier, therefore, except what was visible from the ship, and that was attractive. The town is piled up against a circle of green hills, and, in places, looks as if modern flats with flat roofs, had been built in blocks. Some of our passengers went ashore to see the town. An elderly lady who joined them told me, with amusement, that a Moor had offered to be her guide, and when she had declined his services, had cautioned her with, 'Not safe for ladies here. Very dangerous. Bad boys in Tangier!'

The hawkers, who came out to us in large, dexterously-handled boats that were full of articles for sale, many of them beautiful pieces of coloured leather, were, like all cheap-jacks, comically impudent in their talk. Young stewards haggled with them, offering them a tenth of any price they demanded, and were told, a little too often, perhaps, to go to Woolworth's. One amusing Moor, whose throat must have been made of the leather he sold, vainly tried to sell me an enormous *pouffe* in bright colours that looked well in Morocco, but would have obliged me to re-furnish my house in Devon if there was to be any harmony. Baffled at last by my silence, he put the *pouffe* down, and said to me in despairing tones, 'You got no home?' While I was watching these Moors, Mr. H. V. Morton came to my side and bade me watch the behaviour of one whom he would pretend to photograph. The man, immediately he saw the camera pointed at him, dropped his *pouffes* and covered his head with his burnous. He feared the Evil Eye.

We left Tangier at five p.m. The town looked lovely in the evening light. I had expected to see a burnt, brown place, such as the country round Malaga, to which we were now sailing proved to be, but it was moistly green as the Glens of Antrim, as green as I was to find Nazareth in Galilee. When the lights began to fade, I went to my cabin to finish *In the Steps of the Master*, and ended it that night with increased respect for its author.

VIII

We were lying in Malaga Bay when I came up from my cabin, and immediately I was struck by the difference in colour between Spain and Morocco to which I make reference in the previous section. Malaga is a pleasant city, well placed among hills and mountains that reach out to the Sierra Nevadas, whose snowy ridges we could see far off. The town is spread, in a drawn-out manner, at the feet of the hills, and is even more attractive to look at from the sea than Cadiz or Tangier. The cruisers who landed in all three towns agreed that Malaga is the handsomest. A group of uniformed Spaniards were standing in the passage which led to the gangway, and while I was waiting to go ashore I asked our baggage-master, a Scot with humorous eyes, who they were. 'Spanish Customs Officers,' he said, and most officious they were. They persisted in putting questions in Spanish to people who could speak only English, and were highly suspicious of elderly women who looked as little revolutionary as might be. They feared, it was said, that royalists or counter-revolutionaries might be concealed among us.¹

We had been received with some suspicion in Cadiz, and were to be received with greater suspicion in Turkey. The fear that fills the mind of Europe was more evident on the shores of the Mediterranean than elsewhere. The world is frightened. The baggage-master told me that the Turks had been terribly officious a year or two ago, sending almost a regiment aboard to see that none of the passengers were primed with aeroplanes and guns. 'And do you know, sir,' he said to me, 'not one of them had ever heard of Glasgow! Fancy that! Not one of them!' 'No,' I said, 'but you've heard of the R.N.D.' He winked at me, and made a jerking movement with his head towards the Spanish Customs Officers as if he hoped the statement would impress them; but they stared at us stolidly and gave us no smiles. I did not see a smile on the face of a Spaniard until I put ashore.

A fine baroque cathedral prevails over Malaga, rising high

¹ Events, since then, have justified their strictness; but I have left this portion of my book as it was originally written.

above the surrounding buildings, not only because it is high itself, but because it stands on high ground. We had heard that Malaga was a Red town where several churches had been burnt down a week or two before our arrival, and I landed on the quay in the belief that I was about to see masses of scowling communists, each longing to demonstrate his love of mankind by shooting somebody or burning something; but I found instead, a city full of sunshine and pleasant, prosperous-looking people. *Prosperous*, perhaps, is the wrong word, and *contented* the right one. I want to convey to my readers the impression made on me that the Malagans looked agreeable and well-found. They were enjoying a festival on the day of my arrival, and if they were sour-faced Bolshies on other days, they were happy human beings that day. Our morning in Malaga was the second supremely fine morning we had enjoyed during the cruise: the first being the day we reached Gibraltar. There were bright sunshine, a brilliantly blue sea, and a lovely background of brown hills and distant snow-topped mountains.

The landing-place was almost at the principal point of the city, close to the cathedral. Wide avenues, lined with palm-trees, stretched away from the landing-place, and looked cool in the bright sun. If there were several Rotten Rows stretching from the landing-stage at Liverpool to the Anglican Cathedral and past it, the reader might imagine himself in Malaga, where I saw, for the first time, the graceful girls of Spanish romance. I stood in a street near the cathedral to watch them walking with their boys, and was delighted with their cool, possessive air as they came, nicely painted, from their homes to greet the youths.

Red lips and red nails are universal. I was to see them in Asia Minor, in Syria and Palestine no less than in England, France and Spain. I do not know why women like to sharpen and redden their nails so that they look like bloody talons — I have seen women at parties in London who seemed to have come from one slaughter-house and to be on their way to another — but it is not to please men; for I have yet to meet the man who likes the habit. How dirty the nails look, too, when the varnish has become a little worn. I like a well-painted face, though I hate to see lipstick smearing the teeth, but reddened and sharpened nails are abhorrent to men who are not pansies.

Once, while travelling from Holyhead to London, I saw a pansy take a powder-case out of his pocket and, apparently unaware of the sensation he was causing, apply the puff to his face. A strong, articulate man, who was sitting beside me, whispered, as he fled from the compartment, 'I'm going to the lavatory to be sick!'

I should say that the working-class girl in Malaga, generally speaking, has greater grace of carriage and more personal style and charm than the working-class girl in Leeds or any other industrial town in Northern England. A hundred and fifty years of industrialism have taken the physical beauty, though not the spirit, out of our working people in the North, and a visitor may see too many misshapen and runty men and women with bad teeth and bandy legs and dirty skin in that stricken area. Local patriotism makes inhabitants of Northern towns protest against such statements as that, yet the fact is apparent to the most casual eye. Several generations of under-nourished and foully-housed people have resulted in a population that has lost its looks. The looks could, I think, easily be recovered, but, alas, the progress of invention and the mass production of food in factories are annulling the benefits of better conditions of life. Labour saving devices have given a horde of women leisure which they do not know how to spend sensibly; and they squander in cinemas the time that should be spent on good housekeeping.

Thousands of young men are unemployed because the labour of girls is cheaper than theirs; and these girls prepare themselves to become wives and mothers by passing five or six years in a mill or factory, performing one minute operation many times every day. When they reach the age of nineteen or thereabouts they are replaced by younger and cheaper girls, and are thrown on the labour market, without any accomplishment or skill to earn what living is left to them. If they marry, having no knowledge of housewifery, they feed their unfortunate husbands out of cans. Cooks everywhere are being replaced by tin-openers. Experts in dietetics expect that seventy-five per cent of our population will, in ten years' time, be eating out of tins. The consumption of canned food in Great Britain, during the five years ending 1935, is said to have increased by 1,600 per cent! It is estimated that eight hundred million tins of food

will be eaten in our country in 1936. An official of a large canning factory in London asserted in May 1936, that 'it is young married couples who are putting up the sales of tinned food'. The wives go out to work, and have no time to cook, so they and their husbands empty cans. 'Last year,' said this official, 'we sold no less than 6,650 tons more food in cans than in the previous year. In the first three months' of 1936 'we sold 2,800 more tons than in the corresponding period last year'. He confidently looks forward to the time when the housewife will obtain a dinner of several courses from a slot machine! . . .

I doubt if a healthy and handsome nation can be reared on tinned food, especially tinned salmon, heavily soaked in vinegar, and I am certain that the tendency to draw young women into routine industrial employment instead of domestic service is resulting in a less efficient home life for working men. The testimony of people who come into contact with the working class in their domestic life is unanimous in asserting that the most comfortable and best kept homes are usually maintained by wives who, before their marriage, were in domestic service. I have yet to meet the manager of a housing estate who does not hold this opinion.

It is a public misfortune that our immediate forefathers allowed themselves to treat domestic servants as if, in becoming cooks and housemaids, they had disgraced themselves. Self-respecting girls could not be expected to take employment which exposed them to derision and brought upon them such opprobrious names as 'slavey', 'slut', and 'skivvy'. Every maid was 'Mary Jane'. Any fool of a girl, it was thought, could cook or do housework. Women instinctively knew how to prepare appetising food! . . . Even to-day, factory girls, almost skill-less, and typists, only just able to spell, give themselves airs of social superiority over a cook who performs essential service in a highly expert manner. The domestic economy of our nation will not be satisfactory until there is a general acknowledgement of the value and importance of accomplished domestic workers. A good cook is worth more than a hundred typists or routine factory hands. On her skill depends the physical happiness and well-being of many people. When a woman, a little impertinently, asked my Danish parlour-maid

why she, who seemed so 'superior', had become a domestic servant, Ragna replied that in her country, domestic service was the best employment available to girls in general. The idea that she had 'lowered' herself in becoming a parlour-maid had never occurred to Ragna. It ought not to have occurred to anybody.

IX

This is a digression, but it is not irrelevant. The 'good life', for which we are avidly searching, is dependent, in a large measure, on physical well-being, and the provision of good meals, well cooked and well served, is a prime condition of physical well-being. It is common to say that a good cook is an artist, but we seldom treat her as one, and girls who measure ribbons in shops or perform one minute operation all day in a factory, have the impudence to treat her as their social inferior.

Authors, almost more than other people, are profoundly interested in food, nor do they disdain its preparation. Dr. Johnston once thought seriously of writing a cookery book, and George Meredith, as fastidious an author as ever wrote, was as careful over his meals as he was over his prose. George Moore was more easily flung into a rage by an incompetent cook than by an adverse review. One of the best cooks I have ever known is also the best woman dramatist that England has yet produced, Miss Clemence Dane, and it is my experience that meals are generally better in authors' houses than in the houses of people of other professions. Show me an author who is indifferent to his food and I will show you a very bad writer or one whose view of life is miserable. When I go over in my mind all the dud authors I know, I cannot recall one who keeps a good table or is any sort of a trencherman. Meals in their houses are as hard to eat as their books are to read.

The importance of food is quickly perceived by the traveller who has to accustom himself to strange dishes, and often fails to do so. Generally speaking, a man can easily eat any food, even the oddest, if it is well prepared. Incompetently cooked meals are an ordeal in any country, and those who prepare them should be liable to heavy punishment. The people who do the gravest injury to gastronomy are those who say that all

women are instinctively cooks. Thousands of husbands are suffering acute agonies from indigestion and dyspepsia because of that absurd assertion. To be able to cook well, a man or a woman must be trained and highly skilled. Anybody can be a factory hand, and anybody is, but only a very able person can cook.

I do not share the curious belief held mostly by semi-cultured persons that cooking everywhere is better than it is in England, although I am ready to admit that there is too much bad cooking, especially of vegetables, in our country. The worst cooking in the world is probably to be found in Southern Ireland, where the meals are not only foully cooked, but are of a monotony that has to be experienced to be believed. The Irish working class have less variety of food than any people in Western Europe. Vegetables that are in common use in England are almost unknown in the Irish Free State. I sometimes suspect that the political rages into which Southern Irishmen fling themselves are the result of the monotony of their diet. When I reflect on the foul mess than an Englishwoman can make of that noble vegetable, the cabbage, it seems to me that no terms of abuse are too offensive to be applied to her. She should be prosecuted for misusing food. Yet I have eaten meals in England that I would proudly put in front of any epicure. Hundreds of decent working women up and down our land can make meals that the most fastidious person might gladly eat, but their skill is not renowned because we have yielded to the superstition that our food is always ill-cooked and ill-served.

Americans, whose food is often uneatable, come to England in multitudes and deride meals that are in every respect superior to those they eat in their own country. They boast of a dreadful concoction, called a waffle, which is fit only to be fed to toothless dotards and ought never to be served to vigorous men and women. Their meat is coarse and tasteless, and their fruit is usually without flavour. The only thing an American can do with a chicken is to fry it. His meals are still camp meals, meals prepared on pioneer principles, that is to say, by people who are in a hurry and on the move, with no settled, orderly, civilised life. The American almost incessantly eats out of tins! . . .

What, we may well wonder, is to become of the great masses of tins that are annually manufactured for this canned food? Every Council in the country finds itself with a problem to solve: how to dispose of enormous piles of rusting iron. Millions and millions of tins are every year deposited in dust-bins, and all these tins must somewhere be buried unless a benefactor of mankind can discover a means of melting and re-moulding them. The problem is acuter in America than it is in Europe; for it is increased there by the habit people have of abandoning old motor-cars on public thoroughfares. Once, while motor-ing through Long Island, I saw dumped on the side of the road at short intervals car after car, that had either been burnt out or abandoned because its owner no longer required it. In New York, one may see mountains of rusting iron in certain streets, waiting there for the day when something can be done about them. We ask for bread and are given scrap metal.

The legend that all cooking in France is superb is false. There are whole departments of France where the cooking is detestable: Brittany, for example, and the Midi. I have been served with some fearful food in Paris, and few ways of preparing food are so terrible as 'bourgeois' cooking. I have lived in lodgings in a French city and a French village, where the meals were so poor that to have served them would have brought a blush to the cheeks of a Brixton landlady. There is an extraordinary diversity of ability to cook along the shores of the Mediterranean, and some of it reaches the depths of incompetence. The traveller can always obtain good meals if he is prepared to pay heavily for them, but the general ability to cook well is no commoner in Europe than it is in England. We have all foolishly conspired to treat the preparation of food as a menial task, when we should have acclaimed it as the work of great craftsmen and women.

It is a pity that the tourist in Great Britain has to take his meals in hotels and restaurants and railway trains, where, broadly speaking, English cooking is seen at its worst. Railway meals in England are an abomination before the Lord: the cabbage is boiled until it is a sodden mess; the cheese looks and tastes like stuff rejected from a ferro-concrete factory; the coffee might be tepid dishwater or the water in which the cabbage was boiled; and the puddings taste like hot slime.

When I remember how good apple pie in a deep dish is in American restaurant-cars, and then contemplate the singular composition which is called an apple tart in an English restaurant-car, I wonder that any purveyor of food on English railways is left unassaulted. These people actually cook the fruit apart from the pastry! . . . They take a piece of dough, bake it until it is hard, and then dump it in the middle of synthetic apples or rhubarb and call the resultant mess a tart or a pie. Some years ago, when I found Sir Josiah Stamp in a corner from which he could not easily escape, I asked him where English railways obtained their cheese. But he would not divulge the dreadful secret! . . .

I started on this digression on food because I believe that the standard of good living is steadily dropping, owing to the incompetence of the average cook and the increasing tendency to depend on the canner. Mr. Beverley Nichols once asked for fresh fruit in an English hotel, and was served with fruit out of a tin. 'But I asked for fresh fruit,' Mr. Nichols said, remembering the fruit he had seen in the fields and orchards only that morning. 'This is fresh,' the waiter replied. 'I've just opened the tin!'

That saintly Alsatian, Albert Schweitzer, has a pointed paragraph on the mechanisation of mankind, especially in the matter of cooking, in his *Autobiography*, where, discussing the decay of organ-building, he says:

'Although the simple truths about artistic and sound organ-building have now obtained recognition, the advance in their practical application is very slow. That is because organ-building to-day is carried on in factories on a large scale. Commercial interests obstruct artistic ones. The carefully-built and really artistic organ comes out thirty per cent dearer than the factory organ which governs the market. The organ-builder, therefore, who wants to supply what is really good, stakes his existence on the venture. Very rarely indeed can the church authorities be persuaded that they are right in giving for an instrument with thirty-three stops a sum which would procure them one with forty. I was talking about organs and organ-building to a confectioner with musical tastes, and he said to me: "So it's just the same with organ-building as with confectionery! People to-day don't know what a good organ is, nor do they know what good confectionery is. No one has any recollection of how things taste which are made with fresh

milk, fresh cream, fresh butter, fresh eggs, the best oil, and the best lard, and natural fruit-juice, and are sweetened with sugar and nothing else. They are, one and all, accustomed nowadays to find quite satisfactory what is made with tinned milk, tinned cream, tinned butter, dried white of eggs and dried yolk, with the cheapest oil and the cheapest lard, with synthetic fruit-juice and any sort of sweetening, because they never get anything different offered to them. Not understanding what 'quality' means, they are satisfied so long as things look nice. If I try to produce and sell the good things of former days I lose my customers, because, like the good organ-builder, I am about thirty per cent too dear. . . .",

Distillers tell me that Americans cannot taste good whisky because their palates have been ruined by hooch and synthetic spirit: it tastes to them like distilled water; and the only liquor they can enjoy is stuff that takes the lining off their stomachs.

I recollect, in my youth, finding two boys outside a cookshop in Southwark. I took them inside, and asked the man behind the counter to give them pieces of rich pudding, and then we went outside again, and I watched them eat the curranty stuff. One of them, the smaller of the two, suddenly became sick. A policeman, after he had heard my account of the affair, gave me sound advice. 'These kids are too hungry to like good food,' he said. 'You got to break 'em into it by degrees!' I am told that it is foolish to fling open the windows on entering a gas-filled room in which someone is lying unconscious from gas-poisoning. Too swift a rush of fresh air into that person's lungs will kill him. We must wean people from poison and foul food with great care and deliberation. I think it well to say, lest I should be misunderstood, that the food on the *Laetitia*, though most of it had to be kept on ice, was ample and excellent, well cooked and well served. The meals I ate on land were all good, as will appear in my accounts of them.

X

I should feel horrified at having left my readers standing all this time on the landing-steps at Malaga, were it not for the handsome prospect to be seen from them. I walked slowly away from the harbour in the direction of the Cathedral which stands on top of a long flight of steps. Rumours of

Red abhorrence of religion were so thick about my ears that I went into the Cathedral, expecting to find it almost empty, but it was thronged. A Low Mass was being celebrated at one of the principal altars, and I stood among the worshippers, of whom the majority, to my surprise, were young men and youths. Their devotion was plain and sincere. I should not have felt any surprise had the Cathedral been full of women and elderly men, but to find it full of young men was, bearing in mind the town's Red reputation, remarkable. A girl, kneeling beside me, was instructed in her devotions by her boy, or perhaps he was her brother, for he seemed more attentive to her religious exercises than her personal charm, and I hold it to be a lover's business not to neglect his girl even in the presence of his Maker. God looks indulgently, I feel certain, on lovers, and overlooks their inattention to the service if it is due to loving glances at each other. To have put Adam and Eve out of the Garden because they fell in love is an act of which even deity might well repent.

I draw no conclusions from what I saw in Malaga Cathedral, nor shall I try to generalise on the state of religious belief in Spain. I have neither the knowledge nor ability to do so, but it was clear to me that morning in Malaga that the reports of Spanish feeling I had read in 'advanced' newspapers and reviews fell short of fact and sometimes represented what the 'advanced' authors wished were true rather than what was. Churches *had* recently been burnt in that town - I saw the charred remains of one - but the Cathedral was crowded on the Sunday morning of my visit, and by young men on their knees at Mass. It is true that riots occurred in several Spanish cities soon after I had left Malaga, but I am not ready to believe that the whole of Spain is pining to paint itself Red on that account any more than I am willing to believe that Chicago, which I have visited many times, is crimeless because I have never seen anyone murdered in its streets nor heard a more alarming noise than that made by a back-firing motor-car. It may astonish my readers to learn that I have never seen nor smelt a stockyard in Chicago, though stockyards would seem to be the most apparent sights in that city.

When I read articles by lady politicians who feel that they must dash to the scene of every disturbance, that the disturbance

indeed, will not be complete unless they are present at it, I wonder how much of the horrific stuff they write is blown out of their overwrought imagination and has no relation to facts. I have a great horror of those people who are always dashing about the earth in search of trouble, or in the determination to reveal or uplift something, and I sometimes wonder whether there would be any rows at all if reporters could be persuaded to stay quietly at home. Have we forgotten the great object lesson we received during the General Strike of 1926, when the Trades Unionists unintentionally did the community the service of forbidding the newspapers to appear? Every afternoon, we heard the calm voice of Mr. Stuart Hibberd, the Chief Announcer of the B.B.C., informing us that the train which had hitherto left Charing Cross for Elmers End at 5.15 p.m., would now leave at 5.36 p.m., and were reassured. The Strike ended in a week. Had our eyes and brains been assaulted every morning, afternoon and night by heavily-headlined papers and sensational posters, our nerves would undoubtedly have become so fretted and frayed that we would have been ready to fly into rages that must have brought irredeemable disaster with them. Spain is, perhaps, in the throes of a rebirth. Its people, remembering their great past, long for a great future. 'At the birth of a child and a star,' says Oscar Wilde, 'there is pain.'

I stayed with the worshippers until after the Consecration, and then I wandered round the Cathedral, whose interior is more baroquely ornate than I care about. Magnificent looking priests in handsome robes wandered in and out of passages or sat by the main doors, taking the offerings of the devout, and I was struck by their stature and fine physique. They seemed more massive than the laity, male and female, the majority of whom were about five feet. The priests, each of whom was about six feet in height, looked as if they had come from distant parts of Spain. They were as different in appearance from the Malagans as a farmer in Antrim is from a labourer in Leeds.

As I left the Cathedral, a deformed young man gave me a little pious pamphlet which I took without much thought of what I was doing; for I had a thing in my mind that was puzzling me. It was not until I was well down the steps in

front of the great doors that I became aware of the pamphlet and realised that the young man had expected to be paid for it. By the sale of such pamphlets he earned a living. Embarrassed by my seeming incivility, I turned awkwardly on the steps as if to re-climb them, but, on looking up, I saw him, with exquisite Spanish grace, assuring me with a gesture that I must not dream of returning to pay him the trifling peseta. He understood that I had been abstracted, and I must believe that it was he who was to blame for breaking in on my thoughts by proffering me his pamphlet. My perplexity increased. To go on might seem churlish, apart from the fact that I should be taking the young man's pamphlet without paying for it, but to return and insist on making payment, after having received such gracious absolution, might seem more churlish still. How could I hope to match his grace? Observing my perplexity and indecision, he waved his hand again and smiled. I smiled my thanks, and passed on down the steps, retaining the pamphlet, unpaid for except in my memory. Sir, if I return to Malaga, I will remember your grace and, for your sake will forgive the most persistent, whining beggar I may meet. There was much in Malaga that pleased me that Sunday morning, but the figure of the deformed young man remains more pleasantly in my recollection than anything or anyone else I saw.

The town is lively, and its inhabitants appeared to be contented, even prosperous. I certainly saw no obvious signs of poverty such as, I was told, I should have seen at Cadiz had I landed there. The young men were well and smartly dressed, much more smartly than the middle-aged men, most of whom, though their clothes seemed good, were sloppy-looking and unshaved. I did not see a single young man who had not shaved. Some of them were highly perfumed, a fact which may excite contempt for them in Britons who abhor scents and perfumes, but I do not share this abhorrence, unless the scents are sickly. W. H. Hudson, in one of his books, remarks on the strange aversion Englishmen feel from perfumes, whose use they regard as effeminate, in spite of the profusion with which scents are sprinkled upon themselves by men of the most masculine type in the Southern Americas. I suspect that the Briton's abhorrence of perfume is due to his suspicion that

men who scent themselves fail to wash sufficiently, and use the scent to conceal the rank odour of their stale sweat.

A sensitive nose can be a great misfortune to its owner. Shakespeare, who had a keen sense of smell, must have endured agonies from body odours, as one may deduce from his plays, in which he complains frequently and offensively of the rank scented many. Casca speaks with the accents of his creator when, in *Julius Caesar*, he refers to the chopped hands and sweaty night-caps of the rabble who uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar refused the crown, that it almost choked Caesar; 'for he swooned and fell down at it: and for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of opening my lips and receiving the bad air.'

If a man is a slave to his nose, he must put away thoughts of travel. It is useless to go abroad with a nose that is always sniffing anxiously and turning up in disgust or causing the stomach of its owner to turn queasy because it inhales odours it cannot abide. Garlic undoubtedly makes the breath unpleasant. Its acrid odour is awful. Once, while standing at the outer end of Tours station, I smelt the garlic-ky breath of an unusually abundant Frenchman who was standing at the other end. If anyone doubts the truth of that statement, he may doubt. A man must accustom himself to strange and offensive odours if he proposes to travel, and he will feel humbler about the smell of other people, if he remembers that his own may be embarrassing to them. When we retch at the smell of a Negro, we should do well to remember that a Negro sometimes wants to retch at the smell of a European. To make oneself fragrant with the essence of flowers is at least to make a concession to delicate nostrils.

There is less pestering in Malaga by beggars than I had expected. The chief occupation of many Malagans appears to be the sale of lottery tickets, but even these vendors were not persistent. I wondered how I should know I had won a prize if I had bought a ticket, and concluded that I probably should never know. The Malagans themselves must buy lottery tickets, but although I watched the vendors for a long time I did not see them sell a single ticket. Those who offer them for sale must earn an exiguous livelihood.

It was, perhaps, their courtesy which prevented the guides

from being bothersome. One man approached me, saying, 'Good morning! You look for ship?' I shook my head, and he said, 'Good night!' and left me. That was the extent of the solicitation by guides I had to suffer in Malaga, from which I went with happy memories. I sauntered at my leisure through narrow streets and broad streets, stopping often to stand against a wall and watch the people pass or to let the sunshine suffuse my body. That, of course, is no sort of way for a tourist to behave in a town. I ought to have visited places and have seen the sights and been busy in thumbing a Baedeker, but I am easily bored by sights and cannot comfortably read Baedeker. I like to stand about and stare. Mr. W. H. Davies has written a poem in which he expresses exactly my state of mind as a traveller:

'What is this life, if full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep and cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like stars at night.

No time to turn, at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.'

I may never see Malaga again, but I shall always have happy thoughts of it as a place where I was able to stand and stare without embarrassment to myself or those at whom I stared.

On the night before our arrival at Malaga, one of our passengers, an old man, had an attack of angina while he was ascending the stairs from the dining-saloon. I saw him being

carried to his cabin. His face had the signs of death on it, and in the morning early, he died. I was told by my bedroom steward, Duncan, that a death or two must be expected on a cruise, because of the age of most of the cruisers, but I should have thought that death would be commoner than it was. The death of this gentle old man was the only loss we sustained on the ship. Lady Margaret Watney tripped on the rough pavement outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and broke her hip, but hers was the only accident we had, a surprising fact in view of the rough nature of some of the country we visited and the adventures on which old people so gamely went. Cruising is a blessing to the old, who can make long and arduous journeys with the minimum of discomfort, with, indeed, scarcely any discomfort. I doubt if the majority of young people like to travel in foreign countries. They are bored by ruins and sights and museums and picture galleries, and like to be with other young people and to dance and lark about in familiar places. Old age is the time for travel. It is when we are septuagenarians that we begin to be interested in the past of the world, and travelling is largely a traffic in the past.

The old man who died on the way to Malaga was buried at sea at seven on Monday morning, March 2. The passengers were not encouraged to be present at the committal, and were not told of the hour at which it was to take place. An elderly lady subsequently made bitter complaint of this to me. All her life she had longed to be present at a burial at sea. Now, when the chance had come her way, she had not been told of it. Was it not vexing? Would not I feel cross about it? She was very unlikely ever to have another chance! Were not people odd, the way they went on? She had a good mind to make a strong protest to Sir Henry Lunn about the whole affair! . . . Well, I must excuse her now as she had arranged to meet someone by the swimming-pool! . . .

I felt depressed by the details of this burial. Mr. Morton had seen a body committed to the deep, and his account of it spinning down the water filled my mind with gloom. I like death to be decent and regular, and I have a strong prejudice in favour of dying in my country, among my own people. All my life, I have hated the thought of dying in an alien land

among strangers, and I recall how fiercely Thomas Hardy felt on this subject, how resolved he was that Sir Frederick Treves, who had died abroad, should be brought back to Dorset and buried in his own soil. Was it only a countryman's tenacity, as some might say, that made him, in his old age, exert himself so forcibly to have Treves's body brought home, or was it, as I believe, an emotion profound in every creature that it must end, if possible, where it began? Hardy, having secured Treves's burial in Dorset, attended the funeral and, dismayed his friends by his act, stood bareheaded in the drizzling rain, while the great doctor was lowered into Dorset earth. 'He'll catch a cold and die of it,' his anxious friends remarked to each other, but Hardy was tougher than they supposed, and, beyond a sneeze or two, showed no worrying effects of his exposure on that raw afternoon. I remarked to Miss Marie Tempest, after I had heard of the death of Arthur Bourchier in South Africa, how horrible it seemed to me to die in a foreign country, far from friends and kindred, and she surprised me by saying that it was immaterial where one died if a loved person were by one's side. Well, perhaps; but I pray that I shall die at home. Unfriended burials fill me with fear.

My elders on the *Laetitia* felt none of my despondency about this death at sea. They took it as a stage on a journey, no more lamentable than a stop at Haifa on the way to Jerusalem. Mrs. Arthur Rowntree, a lady over seventy, laughed me out of my depression because a body was floating in a tide when it had better be buried in quiet earth. She had taken part in a burial at sea while returning from Africa to England. The service was to be conducted by the captain who, however, was a few moments late in arriving at the scene of the committal. An officious clergyman, therefore, began the service, saying 'I am the Resurrection and the Life! . . .' At that moment the captain came bustling up and said, 'No, no, I am the Resurrection and the Life! . . .' Her husband assured me that there was something comic even in sudden death at sea. The effects of the deceased must, it appears, be listed and sealed, and kept sealed until the ship returns to her place of departure. As a friend of the dead man, he had been asked to be present at the listing of his luggage. A steward was counting the socks when he came into the cabin. First, he made the number of pairs

ten, then eight, then seven, then he said he had better stop counting or there'd be no socks left! Mr. and Mrs. Rowntree, having been friends of the dead man, were both present at the committal, and she told me that the service was beautiful. Professor Duncan conducted it, the dead man having been a staunch Presbyterian, but Bishop Eyre Chatterton and Canon Wigram were present.

xii

I left Malaga with regret, and took a bad toss on the Gulf of Lions, as I shall henceforth spell its name. It is a nasty sheet of water, addicted to tempests, and even well-weathered seamen dislike it. The *Laetitia* is a good ship, and behaves like a lady in the roughest sea, but she had all she could do to cope with the Gulf of Lions, and was a bit ruffled during the night. She bucked and jibbed and plunged and rolled and once, I thought, stood on her stern and hooted indignantly at the storm, but she kept her head up, and she got the better of that surly and ill-mannered water. I do not believe there was a ship on the sea that night which did so well as the *Laetitia*, nor would I believe that any did, though all the master mariners of the seven seas came with sworn affidavits in their hands, to prove that their ships had. Our arrival at Toulon was three hours late, and as the sky was overcast and cloudy, and the sea was too rough to make walking about the damp decks comfortable for me, I stayed in bed.

My cabin steward, Duncan, defeated my honourable desire to eat in moderation by telling me that I looked as if I needed feeding up, an aspersion which I repudiated with indignation. 'My trouble is that I eat far too much! . . .' 'Well, you'd better have a boiled egg for your breakfast,' he interrupted, and, subsiding meekly, I took his advice. All this, you must know, because I had steadfastly refused to take anything but a piece of toast and a cup of tea for my breakfast. I foiled him, however, by denying myself any lunch except an apple or an orange. We eat far too much on ships. I say I foiled Duncan, but I begin to doubt this; for I recall now that as my lunches grew smaller and my teas were missed, my breakfasts grew more and more gigantic. I had started with one boiled egg. Then two came

with my breakfast. One morning, wishing for a change from eggs, I decided to have a kipper. I got it – and two boiled eggs. Another morning, and I was meekly eating two kippers and two boiled eggs! . . .

I took my breakfast in bed and early in the morning, because I found that I could not obtain enough privacy for reading at any other time of the day. Duncan called me at seven and brought my breakfast to me soon after eight. I read until it arrived, and again after it was eaten until late in the morning, by which time everybody had bathed, and I could take my bath and lie in it as long as I liked! . . .

I began to read Professor A. E. Taylor's translation of *The Laws* of Plato while we tossed on our way to Toulon. I had re-read Lowes Dickinson's *The Greek View of Life*, and, for the first time, his small book, *Plato and His Dialogues*, and Sir Richard Livingstone's *The Pageant of Greece* and *The Greek Genius and its Meaning to Us*, before embarking. Long ago, I read Dickinson's *A Modern Symposium* and his *Letters From a Chinese Official*, which impressed the young men and women of my youth enormously; and I recall Lowes Dickinson when, on the only occasion I met him, I sat and listened to him lecturing on progress and civilisation. Very nervously I had asked him a question at the end of his lecture. How much of the Greek civilisation he had praised so highly was due to the existence of slavery? He finessed with the question and left me unanswered. It was an awkward question to put to a Socialist don. Taylor's dry Introduction to *The Laws* does not prepare the reader for the excellent translation which follows it, but it is sound stuff, and I spent my mornings very pleasantly in reading it. I found myself more of a Platonist than I had imagined myself to be, but aware, also, that Plato was a great prig, and that he sometimes wrote dreadful rubbish. He was, surely, the father of all dictators? I shall make notes about him later in this journal.

At Toulon, we discharged about fifty passengers, who were to return to London, and took on board about two hundred. Rain was falling heavily, and this fact, added to the disembarkation of passengers, made the day dreary. There was no going ashore for me that afternoon. We lunched where we could. I sat at a table where I had not sat before, and over-

heard a singularly depressing brief exchange of conversation between two men who were friends. One said, referring to the other's wife, 'I've ordered so-and-so for Amabel. Is that all right?' 'It doesn't matter what you order,' the husband wearily replied, 'it's sure to be wrong!' I thought to myself what a lifetime of domestic infelicity that remark denoted, and resolved to sit at another table! . . .

In the evening, I went ashore with Mr. and Mrs. Morton and Professor Duncan, and we dined at a *café* on the quay, called the Menelik, which was said to be the best. Mr. Morton and I like mussels, and we had promised ourselves a most gorgeous meal of them ever since we had left Malaga, but there were none to be had because of the storm of the morning and previous night. Deeply disappointed, I looked down the list of shellfish, but a melancholy and discouraging waiter informed me that there were no oysters, no oursins, no anything, except Portuguese oysters, which Mrs. Morton refused to let us eat. I turned away from the lamentable list of eatables that could not be supplied, and looked out of the window at the rain. Even Perrier water was 'pas', and we must drink Vichy. Toulon, I thought to myself, was a bloody town, and I remembered a school joke I had heard in my boyhood in Ballymacarret, a suburb of Belfast, where I was born: why are a sailor's trousers like two French ports? Because they are too loose and too long. Toulouse and Toulon! . . . We thought ourselves terribly clever when we cracked our joke, but Toulon was no joke that night, and I dare say Toulouse is a bloody place, too. Mr. Morton, who had seen a photographic supplies' shop on the quay and had instantly forgotten about mussels, for he is mad on cameras and will fondle a viewfinder or gaze lovingly on a lens, returned at the moment at which it was announced that there were no mussels, and added to the gloom by telling us that the supplier of photographic materials was a delusion and a snare: a mere developer of films who knew little or nothing about viewfinders or lenses! Despondency damply settled on us, and we sat gazing gloomily at the waiter, wondering what sort of a class-conscious chap he was, and how terribly he seemed to feel about being a wage-slave, and whether we had not better abandon this effort to buy sea food and return to the *Laetitia*. Suddenly, the waiter awoke, as it

were, from horrific thoughts on capitalism, wage-slavery, and the nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and suggested that we might have *bouilleabaisse avec langouste*. Professor Duncan, daunted by the dish, said he would just have a chop, but Mrs. Morton, though she was only a pecker, agreed to join her husband and me.

We sat in silence while the food was prepared for us. The air was damp. Occasionally someone came in from the wet street, and dripped rain on the sawdusted floor. The Mediterranean was almost level with the quay, and I horrified myself by thinking it might overflow and drown us all. We felt infinitely wet. So this is Sunny France, I said to myself, and longed to be back in London. How lovely Fleet Street must be looking at that moment, even if it were swimming in water, with the electric lights gleaming on the wet pavements. I remembered the little town in Devon where I live, and assured myself that its least admirable feature was lovelier than Toulon in the rain. I thought lovingly of the gasometer by the railway station! . . . Why had I torn myself away from my three West Highland terriers, Jock and his sons, Jack and Jerry, and my cat, Titus, to come and sit in this mussel-less café and watch the rain dripping down? My despondency had reached its nadir when the waiter reappeared, bearing a lordly dish of *bouilleabaisse avec langouste* — and suddenly the rain ceased to be depressing, and the Mediterranean no longer looked as if it were about to overflow the streets and us, and the waiter forgot that he was a proletarian and a wage-slave, and became a friend and a brother. Mr. Morton and I fell upon the great food, while Professor Duncan toyed with his chop and Mrs. Morton nibbled at a piece of the *langouste*, and we were silent, except for the sound of our champing jaws, for a long time! . . .

That is all I remember of Toulon.

I did not go ashore again the next day, though Mr. and Mrs. Morton went off on a fruitless mussel hunt to Marseilles, but remained lazily on board, busy with Plato's *Laws*. In the evening we sailed for Corsica.

about, though walking was hard for me. While I was eating my dinner I saw an old friend, the Rev. Father Sir John O'Connell, who had come aboard at Toulon, and I persuaded him to sit at the same table with Mrs. Leverton Harris and Mrs. Moreton MacDonald and me. His has been a romantic career. When I first knew him, he was one of the most eminent lawyers in Dublin, but after the death of his wife he entered a monastery where, however, the system was too rigorous for a man of his age, and so he became a secular priest, and is now working in a parish in North London. It seems to me that whenever I go to foreign parts I meet Sir John. The night before I left London for Vienna, I met him. Soon after I had returned from my journey to Jerusalem, I went to Oxford, and there, in the High, met Sir John! . . . That night, on the way to Corsica was too disagreeable and uncertain for me, so I went to my cabin early, and read Plato's *Laws* until almost midnight. In the morning we were in Corsica, which looks lovely from the sea, but was, I found on landing in Ajaccio, less impressive than I had been led to expect. Ajaccio is a poor, slovenly town, inhabited by mannerless people who laugh at strangers merely because they are strangers. The young Corsicans are easily the worst mannered. While I was crossing the Square in Ajaccio I saw ahead of me three Orientals at whom two Corsican girls, highly painted, pointed and then burst into peals of laughter. Their amusement at meeting anyone different from themselves was so great that they doubled up and shrieked. I was to see much of this unmannerly behaviour in that mean and shoddy-looking town. An old Corsican woman, while crossing the Square, was baited by boys. Her wits, poor creature, were wandering, so she was an object of fun. The spectacle of age and infirmity provided endless entertainment to the young Corsicans who were themselves as mean-looking a lot as I have ever seen: ugly, undersized and insignificant. How Napoleon came to be mixed up with this race I cannot imagine. The girls who giggled and guffawed at the Orientals were puny-looking creatures, dreadfully bedizened, and with so much cheap paint on their faces that only a blow-pipe could take it off. I could see that they, too, had long, pointed and reddened nails, like bloody talons! . . . Dr. J. Holland Rose, in *The Personality of Napoleon*, tells his readers that the Emperor's

mother, after catching him, when he was seventeen, imitating the limping gait of his grandmother, gave him a birching! A few mothers like Letizia Buonaparte in Ajaccio to-day would enormously improve Corsican behaviour.

Ajaccio, of course, is dominated by Napoleon, but the Corsicans have not wasted much of their money on perpetuating his memory. There is a large piece of monumental masonry in the middle of the Square, an uneven patch of bare ground, and a more ridiculous memorial I have seldom seen. It shows Napoleon in a Roman toga, sitting on a horse, surrounded by his four brothers, all in togas, and is flanked on both sides by plaques bearing vapid angels who might have been carved by a down-and-out mortuary sculptor in Clapham. There is no dignity in the situation of this monument, other than that provided by the sea over which Napoleon looks. I did not trouble to visit the house where he was born, but I was told that it is a pleasant villa, facing a small garden, and is one of the largest houses in the town. I had difficulty in changing English money in Corsica, but eventually found a bank where a young Frenchman atoned for the uncouthness of the Corsicans by the charm of his own manners. How he endures life in Ajaccio passes all understanding. My disappointment in Corsica was bitter, for I had always longed to visit the island, less because Napoleon was born there, than because it was the birthplace of his mother. I wanted to see the people from whose loins that remarkable woman sprang.

Maria Letizia Ramolini was left an orphan at the age of five, when her father, Giovanni Girolamo Ramolini, who was of Genoese descent, died in 1755. Two years later, in 1757, Maria's mother, Angela Maria di Pietra Santo, married a Swiss Captain of the Genoese Marines, Franz Fesch, for whom the bereft little girl conceived affection. Six years after her marriage to the Swiss, Signora Fesch bore him a son, to whom the little Letizia, now thirteen, gave her devotion. She was proud and lovely, the most beautiful girl in Ajaccio, big and mature beyond her age, with dark chestnut hair in which golden light occasionally gleamed, and brilliant black eyes and fine teeth. Her features were so regular that those who knew her swore her forefathers must have had Greek blood in their veins. The blemishes in her looks that the critical could find, a nose a trifle too long, a

chin too firmly moulded, added to her beauty; for who desires a woman to be splendidly null? This lovely child was married when she was fourteen to a handsome lad of eighteen, a young lawyer who had studied law in Pisa and was nephew to the Archdeacon of Ajaccio: a grey-eyed, pink and white lad with a courageous heart and a graceful carriage, who, while he was a student in Pisa, was called the Conte di Buonaparte, a title which his ancestors had borne and was kept by the family for use only in foreign parts. Carlo fell in love with a girl in Pisa, the Signorina Alberti, but she declined him, and he returned to Corsica, at the request of the Archdeacon of Ajaccio, where, on the day following his arrival, the hand of the beautiful Maria Letizia Ramolini was demanded for him and, after legal formalities and a dowry of fourteen thousand francs were agreed, was granted. On June 2, 1764, the boy and girl were married in the Cathedral of Ajaccio.

Those were hard times for Corsica. The French, shorn of much of their glory, for they had lost India and Canada, were attempting to console themselves for their losses by the conquest of Corsica. Young Carlo Maria Buonaparte felt fire in his blood when General Pasquale Paoli, the hero of Corsica, so much admired by Boswell, resisted the French invasion; and he left his law books and went into the Corsican mountains with his bride and became a soldier. His young heart was full of ambition, for had not Paoli, who was unmarried and certain to remain a bachelor, whispered to him that he should be his political heir and reign in Corsica with Letizia, now even lovelier than before, for the mountains had made her cheeks beautiful as peach blossom, as queen? The girl became a mother before she was fifteen, but the boy died soon after his birth, nor is his death to be wondered at, for his mother, in addition to being a child herself, despite her appearance of maturity, was living a bare and hard existence in a tent in the mountains. His name was Napoleone, and he was to cause confusion to biographers who, puzzled by the name, were to wonder whether the Emperor of France was Letizia's first, and not her fourth, child. In 1767, when she was sixteen, Letizia's second child, a girl, was born, but Maria Letizia, like the first Napoleone, did not outlast a year.

Events were growing harder for Corsica, and harder for

Letizia, who, having lost her infants, had now to bear the envy of other women, jealous of the favour Paoli showed to her and her husband, and the extravagance of Carlo himself. The Buonapartes were poor and becoming poorer. Letizia's dowry was spent on Carlo's aggrandisement, and she had to practise penury that he might make a fine appearance in public. She knew a Corsican woman's duty, which is to be prolific, and she did it. Almost exactly a year after the birth of her daughter, she was delivered in the capital, Corte, of a son who was called Nabulione, the Corsican form of Napoleone. This christening was to increase the confusion of biographers already created by the christening of Letizia's first child. Nabulione's name, however, was altered, about a year after his baptism, to Giuseppe, for by that time the French had overrun Corsica and it was inexpedient for a child to have a nationalistic name. His birth was in a bad time for Corsica. The Genoese sold the island to the French for £80,000, and Corsican pride was humiliated, but appeals to Europe were as unavailing, almost, as Abyssinia's faith in the League of Nations, and Corsica had to fight her battle for liberty alone. Paoli summoned the clansmen who, having heard a fiery harangue from him, shouted, '*Guerra, Guerra! Libertà o Morte!*' and, after an abortive attempt at some arrangement with France, in which Carlo and Letizia were the chief agents, the war began. It cost King Louis a million pounds. Paoli made Carlo his aide-de-camp, and the Corsicans rushed on to the battlefield of Borgo and scattered the French, taking five hundred prisoners. That was good news for Letizia, who was now pregnant for the fourth time.

The Corsicans fought well, defeating the French several times, but they were beaten at Murato, where Letizia, six months gone, watched the fighting. She had to fly from the field and lost sight, for a time, of her husband and her friends. The Corsicans were routed and took to the mountains. Carlo, recovering his wife and son, carried them to Corte, and from thence to a cave in Monte Rotondo, where, with other refugees, they lived in hardship until one day a French officer appeared and, after parleys, informed them that Paoli's fight was over and himself gone aboard a British warship. The conquest of Corsica was complete. The dejected Buonapartes returned to

Ajaccio, Letizia being almost drowned in the Liamene River as they did so. Here the counsels of the Archdeacon reinforced the appeal of Letizia that Carlo should reconcile himself to facts and serve Corsica as best he could under the French. His acceptance of the facts was signified by the change in his son's name from Nabulione to Guiseppe, but the nationalistic ideal was served in the baptism of Letizia's next child: the infant she had carried in her womb to the battlefield of Murato, which she had borne to the cave on Monte Rotondo, with which, while it was still in her body, she had nearly been drowned in the Liamone. 'Before my birth,' the Emperor once said, 'my mother was running about over all the mountains of Corsica.' On the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15, 1769, Letizia, then nineteen years of age, was suddenly seized with the pains of child labour as she knelt before the altar during a celebration of the Mass in Ajaccio Cathedral. She staggered away from the altar in great distress, and reached her home just in time to throw herself on to a couch as her child was born: a boy with a big head and a puny body. He was called Napoleone, and this child, conceived in war, carried in his mother's belly on to a battlefield, and nearly born in a Cathedral, became Emperor of France.

The Buonapartes now prepared themselves for the conquest of the French who had subjugated Corsica. The gallant girl who had suckled her first infant in a tent in the mountains while its father fought the French, was now nursing their Emperor. They had conquered Corsica: she was about to conquer them. The fruit of her womb would reduce France to his obedience and become almost the master of Europe. He would make three of her sons kings of great nations, and marry her daughters to princes; but he would never enroyal her nor make her wear any other title than Madame Mère. She would keep herself to herself, living as simply as her imperious son, whom she adored, would allow her to, and would remember to be thrifty in the Trianon, so that she might hoard the million annual francs he gave her for the day of calamity, which, she knew in her bones and blood, must come. Napoleon had ten tremendous years of imperial rule, and seven years of ignominious imprisonment in St. Helena, but Madame Mère, Maria Letizia Ramolini, widow of Carlo Maria Buonaparte and mother of

the Emperor of France, the King of Naples, the King of Holland and the King of Spain, remained magnificent from the moment when she had borne her first baby on a mountain to the moment when, an old, blind and crippled woman of eighty-six, she died in Rome. Carlo, who was a gallant soldier, a capable careerist and a hefty begetter of infants, for he made her a mother twelve times before she was thirty, did not live to see the glories of his children. He had run to seed before his death, a strutter who liked to deck himself out and swagger a bit in the presence of impressionable women. He drank too much, and ate too much, and had lost hold of himself. He died of cancer of the stomach, the disease which was to destroy his most famous son, on February 24, 1785, at the age of thirty-nine. Napoleon was then under sixteen, but was already a lad of note.

Letizia survived her husband for fifty-one years, and retained the respect of the world to her last moment. There was no time in her life when she did not display dignity. Innately noble as she was beautiful, she offered the world a calm front in adversity and a calmer front in triumph. It is a question which was the greater, the mother or the son. Are not the lines of nobility discernible in the letter she wrote to Castle-reagh, appealing for the body of the Emperor:

‘ROME,

‘August 15, 1821.

‘MY LORD,

‘The mother of the Emperor Napoleon claims the ashes of her son from his foes.

‘She begs of you to be so kind as to lay her claim before the Cabinet of His Britannic Majesty and before His Majesty himself.

‘I shall not try to soften the hearts of the British Ministry by describing the sufferings of their great victim in his fall from the heights of human grandeur to the lowest deeps of misfortune. Who knows better the extent of the Emperor’s sufferings than the Governor of St. Helena and the Ministers whose orders he carried out?

‘In this case there is nothing to tell a mother about the life and death of her son. Implacable History sits upon his coffin; to her inevitable judgment the living and the dead, peoples and Kings, must, equally, submit.

‘Even in the most remote periods of time, among the most

barbarous nations, hate did not last beyond the grave. Is the Holy Alliance of our time going to offer the world an example of unbending wrath unique in human history? And the English Government, are its iron hands to go on clutching for ever the ashes of its slaughtered foe?

'I demand the ashes of my son; no one has a better right to them than his mother. Does any reason exist why his immortal dust should be withheld from me? Considerations of State, what are called politics, these can have no concern with his lifeless body. Besides, what end will it serve the English Government to keep his body? If it was sought to insult the hero's ashes, such a plea would send a shudder of horror into the heart of every man possessed of human feelings. If, on the contrary, the idea was to atone, by belated demonstrations of respect, for the punishment of the Rock, the memory of which will last as long as England, I protest with all the strength at my command, and in company with every member of my family, against such an act of profanity. Demonstrations of respect of that kind will be, in my eyes, the last word in outrage. My son no longer needs honour; his name is enough for his glory; but I have need to embrace his lifeless remains. My hands have made ready a tomb for him in a humble chapel, far from the clamours and noise of the world. In the name of justice and humanity I implore you not to reject my prayer. To obtain the ashes of my son I am ready to beg them of the Ministry, of His Britannic Majesty himself. I gave Napoleon to France and to the world; in the name of God, in the name of all mothers, I beg of you, my lord, that you will not refuse me the ashes of my son.'

'I am,

'MADAME MERÉ.'

It was to see the people to whom this noble woman belonged that I went to Corsica with high hopes. But, alas, alas, I saw two girls with bloody talons doubling with laughter at the spectacle of strangers from the East, and a little troop of boys baiting an old, demented woman! . . .

I went inland, hoping to recover the spirit I had lost in Ajaccio, but the bare and mountainous country through which we drove was too much in a single tone of sepia for my taste, and signs of life were few. We motored many miles, without seeing even a goat or a sheep, but there were wild-flowers enough to lure some of us out of the chars-a-banc to dig up specimens. Life in Corsica must be hard, nor is it made lighter by the primitive habits and beliefs of the people who have less

enterprise than their ancestors, and are more anxious to obtain official posts than to raise crops. Letizia Buonaparte made her son change the capital from Corte to Ajaccio in 1810, but she had better have left well alone. Napoleon's interest in the island was less than hers, and it grew slighter as his interest in France grew stronger. He quarrelled with Paoli, whose admirer he had been, and the old soldier appealed to Britain for assistance, which was given, and in 1794 the island became British, under George III, for two years. Napoleon recovered it in 1796, by which time we were tired of it and unwilling to waste our substance in attempting to retain it, but we took it again for a short period after the downfall of the Emperor in 1814, ceding it eventually to the French as part of the terms of settlement. It has no history now, and is, I was assured, a financial burden to the French, who maintain it entirely for sentimental reasons.

xiv

The journey from Corsica to Malta was not so rough as that from Malaga to Toulon, but it was sufficiently rough for most of the passengers, who found walking on a rolling deck unpleasant. The weather was fine, however, and we sailed along the coast of Sardinia, through the Strait of Bonifacio, down the Tyrrhenian or Tuscan Sea, and along the southern coast of Sicily in sunshine. We reached Malta early in the morning, and were soon ashore. Signs of the British occupation were few. There was not a single warship to be seen. Malta's day, as a naval base, I was assured by those who knew little of these matters, is over. Aeroplanes have made it a death-trap. Our base in the Mediterranean must, in future, be in Cyprus. A casual glance at the map would tell me why Malta, which is smaller than the Isle of Wight, cannot continue to be what it was, why Cyprus must henceforth be more. We are not likely to cede Malta to Italy – the Maltese have no wish to be ruled by Mussolini – though we may not keep battleships and cruisers in its harbours; but it is early days to suppose that the aeroplane has rendered it useless as a naval base. There is no suitable harbour at Cyprus, though one might be made at Famagusta, but only after a long lapse of time, and I am told

that there is not enough depth of water there for battleships. On that subject, however, I am ignorant. But aeroplanes have their limitations and their horrific powers are greatly exaggerated. I have heard of machine-guns capable of firing two hundred bullets a minute. A team with such guns, well directed, might easily put a flight of aeroplanes out of action.

Malta is a lovely, wind-swept island, and amply fulfilled my imagination, from the moment when, landing at Valetta, I saw stretched across a very high wall, like a great birthmark, an immense splash of bougainvillea, to the moment when I sat in Citta Vecchia and looked across the plains at our feet. Malta is the Melita of *The Acts of the Apostles*, and it was here, so far as our trip is concerned, that Mr. Morton came on the first of the steps of St. Paul he was retracing. (He had been over the scenes visited by the Apostle on two previous occasions and was only checking his impressions on this trip.) Professor Duncan, who was Haig's chaplain in the War, was invited with me to join Mr. and Mrs. Morton in a car they had engaged for their journeys, and we went swiftly across the island to St. Paul's Bay, the scene, it is said, of the shipwreck referred to in the twenty-seventh chapter of *Acts*. On the way we passed a sandy beach which was covered with barbed wire. My exclamation caused the chauffeur to smile. 'Mussolini!' he said. Our arrival at the end of the rocky road which led down to the tiny island 'where two seas meet' excited the small group of peasants who lived there, and they came shyly to meet us. Their feet were bare, and I must say now, lest I forget to record the fact, that I have never seen so many barefooted people, even in Ireland, as I saw in Malta, which is also infested with goats that are led about in herds and milked in the streets at anyone's demand. There was once a plague of fever in Malta which was traced to goats' udders, but not until many soldiers and sailors had died of the disease. Shoemakers must often go hungry in Malta. We saw many women wearing the faldetta, which must surely be the silliest head-dress women have ever worn. It is a mixture of bonnet and cape, and it catches the wind like a sail, causing its wearer to be blown about, and preventing her, it seemed to me, either from seeing or walking with ease or comfort. Long ago, licentious soldiers or sailors landed on Malta, causing immense consternation among the virtuous



VALETTA, THE CAPITAL OF MALTA

From a photograph by H. V. Morton

women, who, thinking to save themselves from rape, turned their skirts over their heads so that the ravishing strangers might not gaze on their features. As I looked on the Maltese women I thought to myself that the virtues of their ancestresses might have been safer if they had exposed their faces, for a plainer and less alluring lot of women I have seldom seen. The Maltese are reputed to be handsome, but I cannot endorse their reputation. Physical beauty seemed to me the least of their possessions. The plainest and oldest women were the most determined to retain the faldetta, which is being abandoned by the young. That no doubt is natural. A good-looking woman has no desire to conceal her looks.

The island is bare and, except for cultivated trees, such as olives, oranges and figs, is almost unwooded; but the stony ground is so brilliant with colour, even when the sun is not shining on it, that the absence of trees is less remarkable than in other places. The colour was loveliest at St. Paul's Bay, but I may have thought this because we reached the Bay before the sun began to dazzle our eyes. Peasant girls came out of primitive farmhouses and giggled shyly or ran away in embarrassment when we caught their eyes or questioned them, but came creeping back again in curiosity to see what we were up to. When Mr. Morton tried to photograph them they became excited and coy, hiding their heads and giggling, uncertain whether to be 'taken' or to run away. Our chauffeur from Valetta, not a very bright person and ignorant of his bearings, obviously despised them for the yokels they were, and made no disguise of his contempt for the whole outing. Why people should wish to motor up steep and stony roads that ended abruptly in a rocky field and was inhabited, when it had any inhabitants, by primitive peasants who scarcely knew of the delights of Valetta, was a thing our chauffeur clearly could not understand. His attempts at interpretation were singularly unsuccessful. Either he could not make our mission plain to the giggling girls or they were too stupid to grasp his meaning. I suspect that the stupidity was his, for the girls, despite their tittering, seemed intelligent. It was not until an old fellow, with a gorgeous moustache and a heavily-wrinkled neck, came padding up the road on bare feet, that we were able to obtain any direction. He guided Professor

Duncan and Mr. and Mrs. Morton down the slippery road to the island, a mere nodule of land, which looked no bigger than my lawn, on which Paul had been wrecked; for Mr. Morton is not content to take statements for granted, but must always confirm them himself. I stayed behind, daunted by the rockiness of the descent, and dazzled my eyes with the lovely colours around me.

The uninhabited rock on which Paul was wrecked is precipitous and unkindly, with no shelter to offer the unfortunate either from sun or rain. It is called Selmun or Selmunnet, and bears a monument to the Apostle, who is shown lifting up his hand and gazing out to sea. Paul, unlike his Master, was a great traveller and could not long continue in one place. He had a passion for visiting towns that are almost as inaccessible to-day as they must have been in the first century of the Christian era. The most cursory reading of *The Acts of the Apostles* is sufficient to fill the mind of a sedentary man with admiration, mingled with a sense of discomfort, at his voyagings. We forget that the roads were probably good, since the Romans made them, but the Apostle did not restrict himself to high and frequented roads; he diverged into second- and third-class roads that led to remote places, and adventured himself on the sea in ships that were often unseaworthy.

The boldness of Paul is astounding to the reader of *The Acts*, but it is no more remarkable than his ability. There is an extraordinary pervasion of intellect in everything he says, and an astuteness in dialectics that is enhanced by his palpable sincerity. A devout man's skill in debating tactics is always enriched by the force of his piety; and the skill with which Paul defended himself against his accusers on the occasions which culminated in his wreck, when he was over sixty years of age, in the strait between Selmun and Malta, was made irresistible to the Roman governors by the passion of his belief in the resurrected Christ, even when they were dismayed by it. Festus was sufficiently frightened by the Apostle's bold announcement 'that Christ should suffer, and that He should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles', to cry out in alarm and rebuke, 'Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad'; but he kept enough control of his own intellect to protect the Apostle

from the fury of the Jews and commit him for trial before Caesar.

It was a long and dismal business which brought Paul at last to Selmun, and he had been warned more than once by his friends and followers to keep away from Jerusalem, where, they prophesied, he would be trapped and imprisoned and, perhaps, murdered. His offence was that he denied the validity of Moses in a world of Christ, and had polluted the Temple by bringing Greeks into it. A Judean prophet, called Agabus, had come specially to the house of Philip the evangelist in Caesarea to beg Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. He bound his own hands with the Apostle's girdle and said, 'Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.' The prophecy foreboded death, and those who heard it besought Paul to keep away from the capital; but the saint and hero was of stouter stuff than they supposed. 'What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart?' he replied to them, 'for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' He may have been emboldened by his Roman citizenship which would save him from summary conviction at the request of the Jews, and would also save him from crucifixion, a form of execution which was not inflicted on a Roman citizen, but was reserved for criminals, slaves and rebels against Roman authority: but even with that fact in his mind he must have known that he might still suffer death, perhaps by assassination. His courage was immense. He went, as Jesus went, to Jerusalem in the knowledge that he might be killed. This fear of imminent death was present in his thoughts when he said good-bye to the elders of Ephesus. 'And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more . . . and they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more.'

I was to visit Ephesus a few weeks after I had been to Malta, to visit, as it were, the place in which the trouble that culminated in Malta may have been said to have begun, and shall have to refer to this incident again; but need say no more of it now than that the wrath the orthodox Jews felt against

Paul, a wrath that they sought to wreak in assassinating him, was probably made fiercer by the fact that he had been of the same mind as themselves about the Christians. He was a renegade from their point of view, and had deserted their cause as abruptly as any soldier who crosses No Man's Land and not only surrenders to the enemy, but gives them information about the movements of his comrades. His intellectual eminence alone was sufficient to make him a marked man among the Early Christians. The Scribes and the Pharisees might ignore unlettered fishermen and slaves and emotional women, but they could not ignore this extraordinarily able and educated convert. Mr. H. G. Wells has described Paul as the founder of Christianity, and there is, indeed, a sense in which that description is accurate; for if Paul had not been sensation-ally converted on the road to Damascus, the Christian religion might have petered out.

xv

He had not been long in Jerusalem before the fearful brethren there informed him of the wrath that was rising against him. 'They are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.' His heresy was as great as that of Father Tyrrell or the Abbé Loisy, who had sought to bring Roman Catholic doctrines into harmony with modern thought, or of Dr. Döllinger, who denied the infallibility of the Pope, and it was less than the heresy of Dr. Colenso, the Bishop of Natal, who disbelieved in eternal damnation, and told bewildered Zulus that the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua were not to be taken literally. He would feel appalled if he were able to read the works of Anglican Modernists! . . .

It is essential to the proper understanding of these matters that we should try to penetrate the minds of the orthodox Jews who sought the death of Paul. They were not wicked men. They were orthodox and devout, as fervent in their attachment to ritual and traditional belief as any member of the English Church Union, and as rabid, too. Paul, informing the Jews in foreign parts that circumcision was unimportant, was no

better, from the point of view of a Jew in Jerusalem, than an Anglican who eats his breakfast before he takes the sacrament or, worse and worse, follows the example of the Saviour and the Twelve Apostles by eating the Lord's Supper at night, is from the point of view of a High Churchman.

The news that feeling among the orthodox Jews ran high against him in Jerusalem did not cause Paul to quail. He went on the day after he had received it to the temple and performed the rites of purification in full view of his enemies who, when the ceremony, which had lasted seven days, was ended, clamoured against him 'and went about to kill him'. They created such a disturbance that the chief captain of the Roman soldiers, whose name was Claudius Lysias, mobilised his forces and marched to the scene of the uproar. The sight of the approaching captain and his centurions and men overawed the Jews, and 'they left beating of Paul', who was immediately seized by the soldiers, as much for his own preservation as for that of the peace, and was bound with two chains and asked by the captain what was his name and what was his offence. 'And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude.'

The confusion was so great that the captain who, like all Romans, had the heartiest contempt for the Jews, carried Paul off to the castle for confinement, and was astonished on the way to hear himself addressed by him in Greek; for a suspicion had entered his mind that this unknown man was an Egyptian agitator who had raised an uproar in the city and led four thousand people into the wilderness where they had given no end of trouble to the authorities. The sound of Greek sentences issuing from the saint's lips overcame him so thoroughly that he consented to let Paul address the crowd in Hebrew. The Apostle told the Jews the story of his conversion, to which they listened attentively until he reached the point at which he described how, after he had come away from Smyrna to Jerusalem and had fallen into a trance in the temple, Jesus commanded him to 'make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem . . . for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles'. Then the uproar was renewed, and the frantic Jews flung their raiment on the ground and demanded his execution there and then. But Claudius Lysias, utterly bewildered by the row, refused their angry request and hurried the Apostle into the

castle where he decided to have him examined under the scourge, 'that he might know wherefore they cried against him'. It was then that he received his second surprise, and one which was almost a shock. Paul announced that he was a Roman citizen. 'Is it lawful,' he said to the centurion who was in charge of the flogging party, 'for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?'

The centurion, appalled by the discovery that he had almost violated the Roman law, bade the flagellant drop his scourge and hurried to the chief captain with the warning that he should be careful what he did to Paul: 'for this man is a Roman'. Claudius Lysias, already flustered, felt as frightened as his centurion, and he came in a great hurry to the cell in which the flogging was to have been performed, and said to Paul, 'Tell me, art thou a Roman?' to which Paul answered 'Yes.'

'And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.'

The fear was warranted. A slave who had bought his freedom was likely to feel abashed in the presence of a man who was born free. We can understand his fear if we conceive the state of mind of a naturalised Briton who finds himself in danger of unjustly punishing a Briton by birth and of influential family, for Paul was the first gentleman to become a Christian. All the other converts were working men or members of the lower middle class. He resolved to keep more closely to the law in his future dealings with Paul; so he sent for the chief priests and all their council to come out to the castle and make a formal charge against the culprit.

XVI

The proceedings thereafter were intolerably protracted, and a plot made by forty Jews, as fierce in their fanaticism as Irish Republicans, that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul, was only frustrated because the Apostle's nephew, his sister's son, accidentally discovered the forty fanatics preparing an ambush. Had that boy been Irish, the

high-minded Republicans would undoubtedly have murdered him for betraying their plot. To such depths of depravity do demented patriots descend. The revelation of this ambush had a profound effect on the chief captain who now heartily wished himself out of a mess which might involve him in the gravest trouble. He decided to send Paul to Felix, the Governor, and let him settle his fate: and so that there should be no mishap to the prisoner on the way, he carried him to Caesarea under a heavy escort of two centurions in command of two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen. The party moved off with the prisoner, mounted on a beast, at three in the morning. The chief captain was not taking any chances with this chap. He wrote an admirable letter, terse but clear, as soldiers' letters usually are, to Felix – it will be found in the twenty-fourth chapter of *Acts* – in which he told the Governor the salient facts. Paul, a Roman, had been accused by the Jews of some violation of their laws, laws which clearly seemed absurd to Claudius Lysias, but the chief captain could find 'nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds'. Felix, who had married a Jewess called Drusilla, treated Paul with respect amounting almost to deference, and made it plain to the Apostle's enemies that they must show greater cause against him than they had hitherto done, if they were to obtain a conviction. The Jews thereupon mustered a great array of eminent prosecutors, including Ananias, the high priest, and 'a certain orator named Tertullius', one of those eloquent men whose tongues are for the highest hire. This unctuous fellow began his case against the Apostle with a piece of flattery that could not have deceived the Governor for a second. 'Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.' A Sinn Feiner appealing to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in those terms would not have been more insincere and false-lipped than Tertullius must have seemed to Felix.

The Governor, an easy-going, corrupt man, was more impressed by Paul than by Tertullius. That orator overstated his flattery. He could not shake the Apostle from his facts, which were plain, and appear not to have been disputed.

The result of the first examination by Felix was a remand of indefinite length on terms amounting almost to release without bail. 'He commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.' He went further than that: he and Drusilla held private conversations with Paul 'concerning the faith of Christ', and were almost converted. 'He hoped also that money should have been given to him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.' But Paul was not bribing Felix or any other person, and the hopes the Governor had of filling his purse with Paul's pence were not fulfilled. Two years later, Paul being still under detention or what the Nazis would call protective arrest, Felix was superseded by Porcius Festus and, feeling aggrieved by the Apostle's parsimony in the matter of bribes, perhaps, 'left Paul bound' by way of showing 'the Jews a pleasure'. We need not doubt that the Jews would have had to forgo this pleasure had Paul or his friends been prompt in paying Felix for his freedom.

One wonders what the Apostle was doing all the time that he was detained in Caesarea, but is not told in *The Acts*, although, so loose were his bonds, we may guess that he was busy about his Master's affairs. Paul was not the sort of man to take his ease or to let any other person take his; and we may be certain that he spent much of his time in propaganda. So good a letter-writer must have composed many epistles in those two years which are now, perhaps, for ever lost. The supersession of Felix by Festus interrupted any routine he may have established. Three days after his arrival in the provinces, Festus went from Caesarea to Jerusalem, where the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him of Paul's offences. They demanded that the Apostle should be sent to Jerusalem for trial, and, despairing presumably of obtaining a conviction, plotted to kill him on the way. But Festus had no doubt been primed with the facts of the case, and he refused the high priest's request. If Paul was to be tried, he should have all justice done to him in Caesarea. The high priest and his friends must journey there to give evidence against him. About ten days later Festus returned to Caesarea, and on the day following his arrival, the trial of the Apostle was resumed. The Jews of



A MALTESE PEASANT

From a photograph by H. V. Morton

Jerusalem 'stood about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove', and Festus, who had the wish common to men in new appointments to 'conciliate those over whom he has to rule', and was 'willing to do the Jews a pleasure', tried to dodge his duty to do justice to a prisoner by throwing the responsibility of choosing the venue of his trial on Paul himself. Would the prisoner go to Jerusalem and be judged there? It was a singular request to make, for Festus must have known, or at least have had suspicion, of the plot to murder the Apostle on the way.

But Festus was not dealing with an ignorant peasant; his prisoner was Paul of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city, a man of great learning and ability, adroit in the law. Paul appealed unto Caesar, and that was an appeal which Festus could not refuse to hear. 'Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? Unto Caesar shalt thou go.' The scene must have been intensely dramatic, and we can imagine the confusion and annoyance of the Jews of Jerusalem as they saw the Apostle slipping through their fingers again. For more than two years they had sought to bring about his death, but on every occasion he had foiled and defeated their plots. It now seemed as if he must escape them for good. Once in Rome, they could not hope to touch him. There is an exceedingly interesting account in *The Acts* at this point of a ceremonial visit paid to Festus by King Herod Agrippa II and his sister Bernice. The Governor informed the king of Paul's affair, telling him that he had expected to hear serious accusations made against the Apostle by the Jews of Jerusalem, but instead had heard trumpery 'questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, whom Paul affirmed to be alive'. Agrippa became interested in the story and asked that he might hear the Apostle. The hearing was conducted 'with great pomp', Bernice being also present, and Paul delivered an exceedingly adroit speech to the king whom he declared was 'expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews'. He repeated the story of his conversion, after he had discussed the possibility of resurrection, and had such an effect on Festus that the Governor, as has already been noted, exclaimed, 'Paul, thou art beside thyself: much learning hath made thee mad.' The effect of the speech on Agrippa, however, was otherwise. 'Almost thou

persuadest me to be a Christian,' was the sensational statement made to the prisoner by the king, who left the examination hall fearful, no doubt, lest he should be converted, and informing Festus that 'this man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Caesar'.

XVII

It was immediately after this examination that there began the voyage to Rome which ended in shipwreck at Malta. It is notable for the fact that Paul had the great nerve, he being a landlubber, to tell the captain how to navigate his ship in a tempest, but as his advice on both occasions when it was given, once when it was rejected and once when it was accepted, was sound and justified by events, his audacity must have seemed divinely inspired to most of those who heard of it. The ship had a large company: three hundred and seventy-six persons; and a cargo of wheat. The plight of the passengers in that ill-found ship as it was tossed about the Mediterranean for fourteen days, must have been sore; but the great heart of Paul, even when he was threatened with being thrown overboard, did not quail. He kept his courage. He counselled the seasick and famished passengers to make a meal, and then assist the crew in throwing the cargo of wheat into the water so that the ship might be lightened:

'And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

'And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

'And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.'

St. Paul's Bay is said to be the place where two seas met, though some people have tried to make a claim for Meleda, off the Dalmatian coast, as the scene of the shipwreck, but that claim is not upheld. The story of the wreck is confusing; for

the Bay is not a place where two seas meet, unless the Apostle by this description means a place where two currents met. The Maltese, however, do not doubt that Malta is Melita, and will maintain until their dying day that St. Paul's Bay is the place where the two seas met. They are prompt to produce evidence of the Apostle's three months' sojourn in Malta, and are proud of Publius, the chief of the island, 'who received us, and lodged us three days courteously'. He became, it is said, the first Christian bishop of Malta. Paul repaid his hospitality by healing his father of a fever and a bloody flux, nor was this the only cure he wrought, for the news of what he had done to the father of Publius spread throughout the island, and the sick were brought to the Apostle in great numbers, and all were healed. So the story says. About three or four months later Paul took a ship to Italy, where he landed at Puleoli, from which he went on to Rome 'probably in the spring of A.D. 60'.¹ There he was civilly received and allowed the greatest latitude by the authorities, who plainly did not wish to be bothered with what must have appeared to them a very insignificant brawl. The appeal to Caesar seems never to have been made, nor was the Apostle put to any trouble over the matter. He 'dwelt two whole years in his own hired house' in Rome, 'and received all that came unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him'. Imperial Rome was kinder and more tolerant than nationalistic Jerusalem. What happened to him thereafter is a matter for speculation, which cannot become certainty unless irrefutable documents are some day discovered. The orthodox belief is that he died a martyr's death in Rome, suffering, as was a Roman citizen's right, decapitation, and not, as Jesus had, ignominious death by crucifixion. Dr. C. A. Anderson Scott records the evidence of the Pastoral Epistles that he was released from Roman captivity in A.D. 62, and adds that if we can accept it as sound, we may also 'accept the statement of Clement that Paul "taught righteousness" over a wide area and as far as "the bounds of the West", thus carrying out his declared intention' made in Romans xv. 28, 'to visit Spain:

¹ See *Saint Paul: the Man and the Teacher*, a brilliant short book by C. A. Anderson Scott, D.D.

'We learn also that he returned eastward and resumed his labours, visiting Macedonia, Troas, Ephesus and Crete. There, however, our information stops. If, on the other hand, the Pastoral Epistles are not Pauline or only partially so, then our information stops sooner. In either case we must content ourselves with the statement of a great scholar [Dr. W. R. Inge]: "We know nothing certain about the end of his life. It is usually assumed that he was executed at the end of his two years' detention at Rome. This seems to me unlikely. He had done nothing worthy of death by the Roman Law. Perhaps, as an old tradition asserts, he found his way back to Rome, and was beheaded during the *pogrom* which Nero instituted against the Jews".'

The most we can say with any certainty is that the Apostle lived to be seventy years of age, and may have lived several years beyond that age.

xviii

Well, that is a long digression about St. Paul, but it had to be made, for these are times when people are extraordinarily ignorant of Bible history, and will gaze at you, as a girl secretary once gazed at me, in astonishment when you refer to such commonplaces of the New Testament as 'the camel and the needle's eye'. In any event, it is absurd to take the long journey to St. Paul's Bay and come away from it, knowing no more of its place in the history of Christianity than that it is supposed to be the scene of the Apostle's wreck.

While I sat in the rocky field, above the Bay, waiting for Mr. and Mrs. Morton and Professor Duncan to return, one of the peasant girls approached me with a posy of wild-flowers in her hand and I, fool that I am, dived into my pocket and found money for her. They were poor looking weeds, and I despised myself for falling a victim to a banal exploitation. Originally, no doubt, some generous-minded peasant child offered a flower to a stranger in pure friendliness of spirit, and the stranger having the tourist's habit of demoralising everybody with whom he comes into contact, polluted the purity of the child's gift by offering money for the flower. What a recompense for a friendly gesture! A child, with no other wish than to be kind, picks a flower and gives it to a stranger, and the stranger immediately ruins the intention by commercialising it and making it a transaction. Everywhere I go, whether it be to

Wales or to Syria, children come offering flowers in the pretence of childish hospitality, but with their eyes on the stranger's pockets. What a mortifying fact it is that the natural courtesy of simple people is almost always turned into a trading device by tourists. I was to see a woman bestowing a coin on a child in Palestine a few weeks after I had bestowed one on the peasant girl in Malta. She glooped at the commercially-minded infant, and murmured mawkish expressions at it. The child grabbed her coin, and as it did so a howl of greed ascended from a horde of infants a short distance away, who then descended upon the woman, screaming for *baksheesh* and flustering the poor female so much that she burst into tears and had to be rescued from the frantic, clawing crowd. 'Serve you right,' I thought to myself, forgetting how I, too, had been just such a fool in Malta.

When I was rejoined by my friends we walked towards our car in which the bored Valetta chauffeur was fast asleep, and here I saw an expression on the face of our old guide with the moustache and the wrinkled neck that I would give much, if I were an actor, to be able to repeat on my own face. Mr. Morton paid him handsomely for his services, or so I gathered from the old man's face, for he turned towards the gape-eyed girls and, extending his palm in which the money was cupped, gave them such a look of astonished delight as I had never before beheld. His wink was eloquent. 'All this money,' it seemed to say, 'for a walk down to the beach!' The girls were stricken into silence. Their giggles were ended. They looked at the old man with respect, and I could see that he had become venerable to them. He was a capitalist! . . . As we walked towards the car from which the chauffeur, alert now at the prospect of returning to Valetta, was descending, I saw the old peasant suddenly straighten and tighten himself, and then, like a man who had unexpectedly risen to a great office, walk swiftly to his home, big with importance. I hope there was deep drinking in his hovel that night, and great feasting on unaccustomed food. He looked like a man who would enjoy ample living, and not like one who would hoard his coins or spend them wisely.

The Maltese have, I fear, a hard task to live, for though these stony fields are beautiful with colour, the crops they produce

are small and inadequate. I was told that the greater part of the food consumed on the island is imported, and that the withdrawal of the Fleet from the harbours for a short time is sufficient to depress the standard of living and reduce many Maltese to the verge of destitution. They go hungry when the Fleet goes away. What will become of these people if Cyprus becomes our base in the Mediterranean, and they are left with scarcely a ship in their ports?

Our drive from St. Paul's Bay took us to Citta Vecchia, the former capital of Malta, where we found the ages jostling each other, and the past holding its own very well with the present. There is a cathedral in Citta Vecchia, but the Italian priests who served it were a surly crew and would not stir themselves to give us admission. A Maltese boy who spoke excited English banged at a door and, after a long interval, a gross-looking priest peered at us from a window. Observing that we were British, he shook his thick head and withdrew, nor could the Maltese boy persuade him to return. Another priest, a little less obese, pretended to be engrossed in conversation with a parishioner. The efforts of the Maltese boy to draw his attention to us were unavailing. The priest looked through him and through us. He would have made an excellent Caiaphas, I thought to myself. The Maltese boy was indignant with these priests. 'They no good!' he said. 'They dago men! . . .'

There are two sets of catacombs in Citta Vecchia, into one of which, officially maintained, I penetrated reluctantly, for it is no fun to me to go nosing among graves and coffins, nor do I care much for turning over dead men's bones. A guide repeated, as guides will, mugged information, to which I did not listen very attentively, and I came out more gladly than I had gone in. I declined, despite the entreaties of our Maltese boy, to visit the other catacombs, but Mr. and Mrs. Morton and Professor Duncan went to see them, while I sat in the sunny street and enjoyed the small traffic of the town. I was well rewarded for my abstention from tombs, for I saw a woman walk to a pump and draw water in a large pail which, when it was full, she placed upon her head. I watched her walk away with the ease and grace of a queen. I would not have exchanged that fine sight for all the catacombs on earth. I felt

as if the Winged Victory had stepped off her pedestal and walked down the steps of the Louvre into the street of Paris. While I was watching her, a lad with a commercial eye came up to the car in which I was sitting and, standing on the running-board, said to me, 'One penny! No father!' 'Well, I don't care,' I replied, and the boy, utterly abashed, dropped from the running-board and, gazing at me as if I were some strange animal, edged silently away.

We drove back to Valetta, across the plain that separates the old and the new capitals, and I tried to find flowers for Mrs. Morton, but learnt that flowers are hard to buy in Valetta. Yet when I found some in a shop by the Post Office, I was astonished at their cheapness. The man who sold them to me was not content to take a small sum for them, but actually gave me other flowers as a sign of goodwill. Now here was a strange thing, I said to myself. The peasant girl at St. Paul's Bay had pretended to be generous and had been intolerably commercial, but this shopman, pretending to be commercial, was almost giving his flowers away. It is surprises such as this that make life agreeable. How bleak our days would be without the unexpected! In the street in which I bought the flowers I came into contact with civilisation: I found a copy of the *Observer* for the previous Sunday in a rack, and I bought it and eagerly read my own article!

I came away from Malta remembering most its colour. The terraced fields, in which bright green young crops stood up in the sunlight, looked lovely against very brown, scorched earth that had the appearance in places of burning sand. The potatoes were half a foot high at the end of February, and were flaunting their pretty speckled flowers. I sent a message to my gardener to tell him how the potatoes were doing in Malta, but he merely remarked that queer things happen abroad, and allowed an impression to be made that foreigners are no better than they ought to be. We sailed that evening for Athens, and on the next day heard, by wireless, of the German re-occupation of the Rhine, which seemed natural to us. We hoped they would be permitted to stay there. They ought never to have been put out of that area. If heaven meant the Germans to be anywhere, it meant them to be on the Rhine.

XIX

I was now deep in Plato's *Laws* which I had finished before we reached Athens. As I read *The Laws*, my feeling that Plato was a humourless prig steadily deepened, and I doubted if Socrates really liked him. There must have been many occasions when the garrulous, squat philosopher, whose ugly rough face wrinkled easily with laughter, felt himself irritated by the sight of that solemn face, unlit by any sign of a sense of humour, intruding again upon his speculations. I visualised the look of embarrassment, amounting almost to pain, which would pass over Plato's countenance when a jest appeared to be imminent or a joke was cracked, and imagined him earnestly beseeching the company to be serious. Socrates, observing the solemnity of his ablest pupil, must often have wished that the fellow could sometimes smile. Socrates could associate with cobblers and cooks, brass-founders, leather-cutters, skin-dressers, smiths and pedlars, without embarrassment to himself or them, but it is difficult to believe that Plato felt at ease with a workman or with anyone less solemn or learned than himself. Like Euripides, he could not mingle with the crowd and was silent in the society of ordinary men.

My feelings about *The Laws* swayed from tepid approval to the most violent disapproval. There were times in my reading when I was ready to proclaim myself a Platonist, but those times were forgotten when I reached the frequent passages which convinced me that I would rather die than live in Plato's Republic. He was the first of the solemn humbugs who dictate to the proletariat and announce their will as if they were Moses bringing the Tables of the Law down from Sinai. Moses, the first and only successful dictator, was modest enough to pretend that the laws he had chiselled on slabs of stone were dictated to him by God, and that he was only God's stenographer, but there is no false modesty about the dictators who have broken out on Europe like erysipelas. *They* do the dictating. The descent from Plato to Hitler and Stalin, Ataturk and Mussolini may be long, but it is direct. Were Plato alive in England to-day he would almost certainly be a non-subscribing member of The Socialist League: a less amiable

companion, if a better friend, than Mr. H. G. Wells. He was, I suspect, a bad committee man, sulking and resigning when he could not have his way, and his secessions must have been frequent. He had the habit of all Utopians of denying in one book what he had affirmed in another. *The Laws* is a modification of *The Republic*. He expected all men to be made in his image, and was prepared to destroy those of them that were not. When Mr. Wells turns a corner of his Utopia, he expects to meet Mr. Wells. His disappointment is so great that he flies into a rage and runs back to his writing-room to repudiate himself. If Mr. Eamonn De Valera were to be raised to the *n*th degree, the result would be Plato.

We feel no surprise, as we read *The Laws*, that Augustine, that dreary and sadistic Arab, delighted in Plato — more, I suspect that he delighted in Jesus Christ. The compulsive character of Plato's *Republic*, the arbitrary nature of *The Laws*, must have elated the Arab who, when he read in Christ's parable of the Lord who gave a party to which no guests came, the words, 'Compel them to come in', pretended to believe that they were an injunction to force sinners to repent and to make unbelievers on pain of punishment, become Christians. It was the Augustinian, not the Christian, point of view which prevailed in the Spanish Inquisition. Torquemada's master was the African, not the Nazarene. The thought of torment was so pleasant to Augustine that he could gloat over a red-hot hell in which the unbaptised should for ever roast and suffer, and the discovery that the Greek was as ready as himself to slay dissenters from his opinions and rule must have been very grateful to him. Augustine, who should long ago have been decanonised, is the greatest calamity that has ever befallen the Church: the cry-baby of Christianity who, having behaved like a cad to the girl he seduced, ran whimpering to his mother, a tiresome old woman, so that he might hide behind her apron strings. They might have served as models to Dickens for Mrs. Heep and Uriah. The single incident which humanises Augustine is his prayer, 'O God, give me chastity, but not yet!' It is one of the insoluble mysteries of the Christian religion that this unctuous and unsavoury Arab should receive the respect, even the veneration, of multitudes of good men and women. A Pope will one day immortalise himself and obtain the

gratitude of all mankind by revising the Calendar of Saints and expunging from it some very dubious characters; and Augustine will be the first to go.

Plato is more tolerable than Augustine, but his doctrines are no less dreadful than the Arab's. He seems to have suspected himself when he declined the invitation of Epaminondas to draft the constitution and code of Megalopolis in 371 B.C., but if he was modest then, he was less modest about a decade later, when he accepted the invitation to try to make an Albert the Good of Dionysius the Second in Syracuse. It is true that he accepted this invitation against what Professor Taylor calls his better judgment, but he accepted it; and we may believe that the chance to do a little practical dictating and to indulge his passion for oppressive laws was not distasteful to him. It is an ominous sign of the tyrannical character of Plato that he has retained the devotion of schoolmasters, those incipient dictators, throughout the ages. We must watch men like Plato; for we know not the hour in which they will snatch away our liberties. On the other hand, we may take comfort from the fact that the Platos of the world have only to be put in authority to expose very promptly their incompetence. The invitation to Plato to play the tutor to Dionysius II was an adroit one. It not only blew up Plato's reputation as a man of affairs, but shook some of his arrogance out of him. He went home from Syracuse to revise *The Republic*.

His *Republic*, could he have established it, would have been a static community, so far, that is to say, as any community can be made static; for it is not the nature of human society to stay still; it must either increase or dwindle, grow or die. There was to be the least possible movement in it. The dead hand of Plato was to hold it down for ever. He distrusted the young and the middle-aged, putting his trust exclusively in the elderly and the old. His attitude towards those who are not approaching senility is so hostile, indeed, that there are times when it is hard to believe that he is not satirical, that all his anti-youth enactments are not just his fun. The Athenian, in the first book, informs Clinias, the Cretan, and Megillus, the Lacedæmonian, that the best of their laws is 'the enactment that no young man shall raise the question which of them all are what they should be and which not, but that all should agree,

without a dissonant voice, that they are all god-given and admirable, flatly refusing a hearing to anyone who disputes the point, while if an older man has any reflections to make, he must impart them to a magistrate of his own age, when none of the younger men are by.' Herr Hitler has never said anything more arbitrary than that.

His admiration for Egypt is immense, and is given for precisely the reason which causes L. March Phillips in his extraordinarily stimulating book, *The Works of Man*, to find fault with the Egyptian theory of life: namely, the stationary condition of mind in which the Egyptian lived. 'That nation,' says the Athenian in the second book, 'long ago recognised the truth we are now affirming, that poses and melodies must be good if they are to be habitually practised by the youthful generation of citizens. So they drew up the inventory of all the standard types, and consecrated specimens of them in their temples:

'Painters and practitioners of all other arts of design were forbidden to innovate on these models or entertain any but the traditional standards, and the prohibition still persists, both for these arts and for music in all its branches. If you inspect their paintings and reliefs on the spot, you will find that the work of ten thousand years ago — I mean the expression not loosely, but in all precision — is neither better nor worse than that of to-day; both exhibit an identical artistry.'

This, says Clinias, is 'a most amazing state of things' but he had better have said it was intensely depressing, for if all the arts at the end of ten thousand years are no better than they were at the beginning, what object is there in the continuation of life for so long a time? Merely to repeat the accomplishment of another age is a poor excuse for existing. March Phillips shows, I think beyond refutation, that Plato was wrong about Egyptian art, that at the end of ten thousand years it had deteriorated because it had repeated the same effect too often; but Plato boldly tells Clinias that the 'amazing state of things' in Egypt is 'immensely to the credit of their legislators and statesmen:

'No doubt one could find grounds for censure in other Egyptian institutions, but in this matter of music, it is a fact and a thought-provoking fact, that it has actually proved possible, in such a sphere, to canonise melodies which exhibit an

intrinsic rightness permanently by law. That must have been the doing of a god, or a god-like man. . . . So, as I was saying before, if we can but detect the intrinsically right in such matters, in whatever degree, we should reduce them to law and system without misgiving. . . .

There is not one word in that assertion to Clinias which could not be made, has not, in effect, been made by Stalin or his satellites, by Hitler, by Mussolini, by Kemal Ataturk, by every oppressive person now polluting the politics of Europe. How quick these men are to detect divinity in themselves. 'That must have been the doing of a god, or a god-like man! . . .' 'We Nazis,' says General Goering in his book *Germany Reborn* 'believe that in political affairs Adolf Hitler is infallible, just as the Roman Catholic believes that in religious matters the Pope is infallible.' His madness needs only to become a trifle more pronounced for him to assume the god! . . . Plato qualified his arbitrary statement by stipulating that we must first detect the intrinsically right before we reduce it to law and system, but who are we, fallible men that we are, to hope that we may succeed in detecting the intrinsically right in anything? He seems aware of the danger of bull-dozing the young with the decrees of the government, when he refers with some contempt to the legend that Cadmus sowed the earth with dragon's teeth from which the Thebans sprang. It is, he says, a 'striking proof for the lawgiver that the youthful mind will be persuaded of anything, if one will take the trouble to persuade it,' yet he urges his companions to guard the young against any contact with critical minds and to hedge their community about with such restrictions that they may not even know there is any criticism of their community to be made.

He is so resolved that there shall be an inflexible routine in the Republic that he lays down rigid rules for the government of festivals. 'The plan is to consecrate all our dances and all our tunes. . . . If any man tries to introduce hymn or dance into the worship in contravention of these canons, the priests of either sex, acting in conjunction with the Curators of Law, shall have the warrant both of religion and law in excluding him from the festival; if the excluded party declines to submit to this excommunication, he shall for life be liable to indictment for impiety at the instance of anyone who cares to

institute proceedings.' He harps on this prohibition of all innovation in public worship in the seventh book until one begins to believe him obsessed by the fear of novelty. 'No poet,' he says:

'shall compose anything in contravention of the public standards of law and right, honour and good, nor shall he be at liberty to display any compositions to any private citizen until he has first submitted it to the appointed censors of such matters and the Curators of Law, and obtained their approval.'

The Minister of Education is the man whose task it is to fix these laws, and, once fixed, 'thenceforth there must be no innovation in anything which has to do either with dance or with song. No, our citizens and their city must preserve their identity by a uniform life of unvarying pleasures, where all are as utterly alike as may be in all happiness and bliss'. Augustine must have hooted with delight when he read that passage, unless, indeed, the tolerance of any pleasure, varied or unvaried, was repugnant to him. The Commissars of the Soviet Republics could not wish for a better guide to dictation than *The Laws*.

xx

Plato lays down laws, not only for the style of the compositions, but for the poets themselves:

'The composition of such verses shall not be for every one; the author must, in the first place, have reached the age of not less than fifty; moreover, he must not be one of those who have within them a sufficient vein of literature and music but have never achieved one noble and illustrious deed. But the verses of composers who are in their own persons men of worth, held in public honour as authors of noble deeds, may be sung, *even though it have no real musical quality.* . . .'

I interrupt the quotation to remark that the italics in that quotation are mine.

' . . . The selection of composers shall be in the hands of the Minister of Education, and his colleagues the Curators of Law, who are to allow them this special privilege: their music, and theirs only, shall be free and uncensored, whereas this liberty shall be granted to no one else, and no other citizen shall presume, without the Curator's licence, to sing an unauthorised

air, were its notes more ravishing than those of Thamyras or Orpheus themselves, but only such verse as has been duly consecrated to the gods. . . .

that is to say, such verse as the government, acting through the Minister of Education; has approved:

' . . . and such compositions by men of true worth as have been pronounced to convey laudation or reproof with due propriety. . . . '

that is to say, by sycophantic persons who have led lives that are, from the point of view of the government, blameless. The spectacle of Plato demanding a collection of yes-men is both saddening and sickening. Shelley, like Byron, was an habitual rebel against authority. These two, with Keats, would have found less favour in the eyes of Plato than would the late Alfred Austin or the late Canon Rawnsley. But even so conservative a man as Shakespeare would have been disqualified by Plato, on the ground of age, if on no other ground, for he had only just passed his fiftieth year when he died.

Let no one suppose that Plato's prohibitions are unlikely ever to be imposed. They have been imposed in at least three great European countries in our own time, and are imposed, with the approval of Mr. de Valera and the Roman Catholic Church, in the Irish Free State, where no book on birth control, whether it favours or is opposed to that system of regulation, is allowed to be circulated, and a volume by Mr. Bernard Shaw has been banned. No newspaper containing advertisements of books on birth control may be sold in that singular State.

I find an entertaining comment on this oppressive utopianism in a fine book, the best on Greece that I have read, entitled *From Olympus to the Styx*, by F. L. and Prudence Lucas, in which these authors, describing a journey through Greece, refer to a Platonic philosopher, George Gemistós Pléthon, who went to live in Mistrá at the end of the fourteenth century. 'Like his master Plato, he proposed in his Utopia to put to death all who rejected his religion. The proper method of execution, Gemistós decided, was burning alive. Such are reformers. His own book was burned, after his death in 1460 at the age of nearly a hundred, by the Patriarch Gennadios.' A still funnier fact is that Plato's *Gorgias* was burned by Capo d'Istrias when he was President of the Greek Republic on the ground

that it was subversive literature. I cannot forbear from quoting a witty passage from this brilliant book, in which the authors, repeating a remark made to them about the limitation of families by a Swiss guide, remark that 'the Roman Church — with its half cynical sense of reality will doubtless end by swallowing the inevitable, as with Copernicus and Darwin, and evolve some doctrine of Immaculate Contraception.'

The priggery and oppressive quality in Plato's *Laws* are apparent in his stipulation in the eleventh book, that:

'No composer of comedy, iambic or lyric verse shall be permitted to hold any citizen up to laughter, by word or gesture; with passion or otherwise; in case of disobedience the Presidents of the festival shall give orders for the offender's expulsion from the State's territory within the course of the day, on pain of a fine of three minae to be paid to the deity in whose honour the festival is held. The persons to whom permission has been granted by an earlier arrangement to compose personal satire shall be free to satirise each other dispassionately and in jest, but not in earnest or with angry feeling. *The actual drawing of the distinction shall be left to the Minister in charge of the system of juvenile education. If he approve the piece, its composer shall have licence to produce it in public; if he disapprove the composer shall neither appear in it himself nor train any other person, slave or free, to perform it, on pain of being declared a bad citizen and a law-breaker.*

(The italics are mine.) The politicians of eighteenth-century England were so upset by derisive remarks made by authors in plays that they established a censorship of the drama which had more than once been declared to have fastened a strangle-hold on the theatre, a declaration which is, I think, an exaggeration of fact; but the touchiest and most humourless politician in England has never dared to propose Plato's prohibitions, though they have been commonly proposed and established in other places.

But these, it may be said, are only bans on art, and need not alarm the plain citizen who has never felt any great kindness towards authors and artists and composers and sculptors and such. Plato, however, does not restrict his tyrannous enactments to these people. His *Laws* apply to the whole community, even in its intimate and most private concerns. He lays down the law about marriage as emphatically as he lays it down about verse.

He begins his discourse on marriage by a discussion of sexual relations outside marriage, enforcing his argument with a disputable assertion about the habits of 'birds and many other creatures', who, he says, 'live in continence and unspotted virginity – until the age for procreation – when they have reached that age, they pair together, the male with the female and the female with the male their preference dictates, and they live thereafter in piety and justice, steadfastly true to their contract of first love.' After delivering himself of this astounding stuff, Plato remarks "Surely you," we shall say, "ought to be better than the beasts." Why, we shall also say, does Plato suppose that a monogamous animal is superior to one that is polygamous or polyandrous? A ram has many ewes, and a bull many cows. On what grounds are we to suppose that a gander which is faithful for life to one goose is more pious and just than a chiff-chaff which has been known to have two hens or a corn bunting which has accumulated a harem of seven hens, or a stallion which has many mares, or that there is any question of piety and justice in the matter? We are not certain that swans and geese are monogamous, but we do know what ill-tempered fowls they are, and how savage a father a swan can be. Monogamy may be a more virtuous condition of life than polygamy, although the Early Christians were not of that opinion, for they practised promiscuity, and it is certainly less expensive, in spite of the fact that many men have found one wife more costly than several; but Plato does not demonstrate the superiority of his argument from birds and animals. The beasts, broadly speaking, seem to have no sense of sexual exclusiveness, and are as ready to commit incest and sodomy as they are to commit adultery. I doubt if the male among the majority of animals has the slightest understanding of the fact of paternity; being almost as ignorant in this respect as Professor Malinowski suggests the Trobriand Islanders are. (But one must be careful how one cites Professor Malinowski, for poor Mr. Bertrand Russell, who quoted him in *Marriage and Morals*, was reproved, in the preface to the third edition of *The Sexual Life of Savages*, for missing the point.)

In his sixth book, Plato regulates marriage in a way that would not, and ought not to, be endured by self-respecting people. A Board of Matrons is to supervise the relation of the bride with the bridegroom. Women are to be allowed to marry between the ages of sixteen and twenty, but men may marry only between the ages of thirty and thirty-five. The married couple are to be called 'procreants' and the period of procreation is to last for ten years, during which time the procreants shall be strictly supervised by the Board of Matrons, whose business it is to see that their couplings are carried on according to the rules and regulations. Persons coupling in an unauthorised manner are to be reported to an assembly of Matrons at the temple of Ilithyia! . . . There is, in brief, to be an immense amount of prying in Plato's Republic, especially by elderly women.

The limiting age 'for official appointments shall be forty for a woman, thirty for a man. For military service the term, in the case of a man, shall be from the age of twenty to that of sixty; for a woman — whatever military employments it may be thought to impose on women — after she has borne her children, what it is possible and fit to enact in such cases, up to the age of fifty'. If a couple should quarrel and wish to separate or to be divorced, ten men, Curators, and ten women of the Board of Matrons, shall be appointed to try 'to effect an accommodation — but if the storm rages too high within, they shall seek the best mates they can for each party.'

'When the discordant parties have no children, or too few, an eye shall be had also in the new alliance to procreation. . . . If a woman die — and there be no children, the husband shall be bound to marry again, until he have begotten children in number sufficient for the house and for the State. If the husband die leaving children in sufficient number, their mother shall remain in the household to bring them up. But if she be deemed unduly youthful to live without a man and keep her health, her kinsmen shall communicate with the women who have charge of wedlock and act as shall seem good to themselves and them.'

If a man and a woman, at the end of the period of procreation, ten years, are childless, they shall 'in consultation with their kinsmen and the official board of women, arrange terms of

separation with a view to the interest of both parties,' an arrangement which seems sensible enough, if, that is to say, there is a wish for separation; but if the infertile couple quarrel about the terms of separation, ten Curators of the Laws are to make a decision for them, while 'the ladies' of the Board of Matrons 'are to have entrance to the households of the young people, and are to stay them from their sinful folly, partly by admonition, partly by threats'. One might suppose that a couple, however deep their disagreement, would consent to any arrangement, however harsh, rather than have ten prying elderly women poking their noses into their affairs, alternately admonishing and threatening them; but Plato had great faith in the wisdom of prying old women.

To make certain that outside influences shall not be brought to bear upon the population until the population has reached the age at which influences of any sort are unlikely to be operative, Plato makes rigid regulations about foreign travel by Republicans, and travel in the Republic by foreigners. 'Now free intercourse between different States,' he says, 'has the tendency to produce all manner of admixture of characters, as the itch for innovation is caught by host from visitor or visitor from host:

'Now this may result in the most detrimental consequences to a society where public life is sound and controlled by right laws, though in most communities, where the laws are far from what they should be, it makes no real difference that the inhabitants should welcome the foreign visitor and blend with him, or take a jaunt into another State themselves, as and when the fancy for travel takes hold of them, young or old. On the other side, to refuse all admission to the foreigner and permit the native no opportunity of foreign travel is, for one thing, not always possible, and for another, may earn a State a reputation for barbarism and inhumanity with the rest of the world; its citizens will be thought to be adopting the ill-sounding policy of "exclusion of aliens" and developing a repulsive and intractable character; but reputation, for good or ill, with the outer world ought never to be under-valued. . . .'

I interrupt the quotation of this singularly smug passage to call especial attention to the succeeding paragraph, in which Plato's smugness becomes almost unsurpassable:

' . . . Mankind at large may come far short of the real possession

of virtue, but they are by no means equally deficient in the power to judge of the vice or virtue of others; there is a wonderful sagacity among the wicked themselves by which the very wickedest of them are often enabled to discriminate better men from worse accurately enough in their thought and language. . . .

His confidence, first, in his own virtue, and second, in the virtue of the Greeks is immense; but he is willing to admit that lesser breeds without the law can be both intelligent and virtuous on occasions. He goes on to give 'sound advice' to those who 'prize a good reputation with the rest of the world':

'The one absolutely right, supreme rule, in fact, is first to be genuinely good and then to pursue repute for goodness, never, if we mean to be perfect, mere reputation for itself; so it will be only proper for the State we are now founding in Crete, like others, to earn the highest and most illustrious reputation for virtue with all its neighbours, and we may have every reasonable hope that if our plan is carried out, ours will be one of the few well-governed States and countries that enjoy the beams of the sun and his fellow-gods.'

The thought in that assertion is feeble. How is one to know what is 'genuinely good'? How is a nation to become unanimous in its appreciation of genuine good? If an entire nation were to agree on what is genuinely good, how could it make other nations agree that its standard of the genuinely good is genuinely good?

The British people were not agreed on their own virtue in the Boer War, but even if they had been they could not have had any hope that the European nations would share their admiration for it. The Germans were more generally agreed on their virtue in 1914 than the British were in 1899; but they were not joined in that agreement by Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, Serbia and the United States. Italy felt assured of her own virtue in 1936 and equally assured of the vice of Abyssinia. Her task was to redeem the Ethiopians from their lamentable state of general depravity, but fifty members of the League of Nations failed to find Italy's crusade for civilisation and virtue as holy as it seemed to Mussolini and that 'poor, helpless old man', the Pope, as Archbishop Hinsley of Westminster called His Holiness. Hitler's sincerity in the pursuit of what he believes to be genuinely good is indisputable,

but his sincerity does not commend his policy to the Jews. The Communist is convinced that the Capitalist ought to be exterminated: the Capitalist is not so certain of this necessity. On the contrary, he feels assured that a Communist is a pest who may justly be executed. There was no agreement in Hellas. The Spartans could find little or no virtue in the Athenians, and the Athenians despised the Spartans. How jejune was Plato when he made the Athenian spout that schoolboy stuff about 'genuine' good, and assume that its acquisition by one community would instantly be recognised by all other communities? Experience proves, if it proves anything, that universal censure of one people does not cause the censured to feel ashamed of themselves or to realise instantly and without any doubt how wicked they have been. It is more likely to confirm the censured in their contumacy, and to repeat the grandiloquent assertion of Athanasius, 'I, Athanasius, against the world.' The fact that the world decided against Great Britain in 1899 did not make the British feel that the world was right: it made them feel that the world was wrong; that the world was envious of Britain's authority and strength; that the world had the pygmy's eagerness to see the giant thrown to the earth and destroyed.

Plato proposes rules 'in respect of travels in foreign parts and admission of aliens to the Republic's territory:

'First, no permission of foreign travel shall, in any circumstances whatsoever, be granted to any person under the age of forty; further, such permission shall be granted to no person for his private occasions, but only to those travelling on business of State, envoys, embassies, and deputations to divers ceremonies of religion. (It will not be proper to reckon absences in war, or field service among these occasions of State.) As it will be our duty to send deputations to Apollo of Pytho and Zeus of Olympia, as well as the sacrifices and games with which these gods are honoured, we must do our utmost to make these deputations as numerous, noble and distinguished as we can; they must be composed of men who will make our city illustrious in the gatherings of religion and peace, and cover her with a glory to match her renown in the field; *on their return they shall explain to their juniors how inferior are the ways of other nations to the institutions of their own land.*'

The passage which I have italicised is surely the supreme

example of smugness in any national. It is, alas, the spirit which animates several great nations in Europe to-day. The Bolsheviks have so bull-dozed the Russian young that these unfortunate boys and girls firmly believe that the standard of living in the Soviets is superior to that in all other countries. The Italian young have been subjected to so much propaganda that they go about asserting that Great Britain is degenerate because two or three hundred undergraduates announced in the Oxford Union that in no circumstances would they fight for their king and country. Had Mussolini shared this delusion and declared war on Great Britain, the vast majority of those undergraduates would have been among the first to volunteer to fight Mussolini's conscripts.

I put down *The Laws*, as we approached Athens, feeling that Plato's folly was at least as evident as his wisdom, and that any community founded on his principles must inevitably come to ruin, either because of the revolt of its inhabitants or because of their intellectual decay through excessive supervision. He was content with slavery; he feared the young, and insisted that those who were found worthy by the authorities alone were fit to hold any office; he despised merchants and artists; he resisted innovation and was egotistically nationalist; he believed in obtaining agreement by putting dissenters to death; he was narrow, oppressive and puritanical, fearful and suspicious; he was the father of all humourless intellectual prigs and dictators. His rule about the burial of suicides is significant of his uncharitable heart. 'But the graves of such as perish thus, must, in the first place, be solitary; they must have no companions whatsoever in the tomb; further, they must be buried ignominiously in waste and nameless spots on the boundaries between the twelve districts, and the tomb shall be marked by neither headstone nor name.' He could descend to depths of silliness that were equalled only by the megalomaniac Xerxes who flogged the Hellespont because it was stormy, and fell in love with a plane-tree, which he decorated with golden bracelets and necklaces, and left in the guard of a sentry. Was Xerxes, who was probably mad, stupider than Plato who was a philosopher and reputed to be the greatest of Socrates' students, yet made the Athenian, in the ninth book of *The Laws*, lay down rules for the trial of beasts and inanimate

in danger of assassination by the people whom he had delivered. Dictators, too, have their troubles. But there is a tendency among politicians to-day to treat peoples as if they were cattle, to be sent here or sent there, according to the whim of their rulers or the exigencies of the political situation. We need a herd of workmen *there*, the Bolsheviks say, and the entire inhabitants of a village will be transported a thousand miles away, whether they wish to be or not; and any sign of recalcitrance on their part will be treated as a mark of disaffection towards the State and heavily punished. The disaffected may be liquidated amid rousing cheers from devoted lovers of humanity. When Mr. Anthony Eden, intending to placate the Ducé and protect Abyssinia from invasion, offered to cede a strip of British Somaliland to Abyssinia, giving it access to the sea, the wishes of the people of the territory to be ceded were not consulted, though their interests were to be safeguarded, and, so strange is the temper of our time, it was Conservatives who complained of this omission, it was Liberals who said it was of no consequence. That limited lover of mankind, Mr. A. J. Cummings, the political editor of the *News Chronicle*, exclaimed to the protesters, 'Who cares about the feelings of flea-bitten Bedouins?'

I am not myself a Liberal, nor do I believe that men should be allowed to keep the wealth of a country undeveloped merely because they happen to have been born there; but neither do I believe that human beings, even if they are only flea-bitten Bedouins, are to be given away like pounds of tea to importunate people who must somehow be bribed to keep the peace. Plato remarks to those who teach that the gods are always indulgent to the unrighteous and the wrong-doer, if a share of the plunder is assigned to them, that "tis as though the wolf should assign some small part of his spoil to the sheep-dog, and the dog, pacified by the present, agrees to the ravaging of the flock'. He might change many of his opinions were he alive to see the Greeks of Anatolia now floundering in the swamps of the Piraeus or attempting to keep body and soul together on the high land behind Salonica. They were dumped on these waste lands and told to enjoy the benefits of progress and civilisation, and there they are, struggling ineffectually to bring order out of chaos. It was this confusion of compulsorily

migrated people which I saw when I landed on the Piraeus, but I did not know then what was the cause of the confusion, and thought to myself that the Piraeus had always been a messy hole, as much in the time of Pericles as it is now: a continuing danger to Athens even when the Athenians had fortified it. I drove through it with a sinking heart, thinking to myself that Athens was about to disappoint me more even than Corsica had.

All my life I have dreamt of Greece as a place of beauty. My father, who died while I was an infant, and of whom I have no recollection, used to fill note-books with Greek sentences for no other reason that I can think of, than his love of their shape. I share his love of the Greek alphabet, though I am too lazy to learn Greek, and I will take down my copies of the Nonesuch Press *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in Pope's translation, and let my failing eyes enjoy the lovely letters. I cannot tell why the word 'Iliad', which has a beautiful falling sound in my ears, should look better when it is written in Greek:

ΙΛΙΑΔΟΣ Α

and if anyone asks me why I feel a thrill at the sight of the first lines of the *Iliad* in Greek, though I do not understand a word of them, which I do not feel when I see the same lines in English, I shall have difficulty in persuading him that I am not an affected highbrow, professing an affection which he does not feel and anxious only to overawe the unlearned. I reprint the lines here for the pleasure it will give me to see Greek in one of my books:

Μῆνιν ἄειδε, Θεά, Πηληγάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἦ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἀλγε' ἔθηκε,
τολλὰς δ' ἵφθίμους ψυχάς "Αἰδί προταψεν
ἡρώων, αὐτοῖς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἰωνούσι τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείστο βουλή,
ἔξ οὐ δὴ τὰ πρώτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἄτρεδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δίος Ἀχιλλεύς

Printed thus, though they are unintelligible to me, they give me greater pleasure than when they are printed in English:

"The wrath of Peleus' son, the direful spring
Of all the Grecian woes, O goddess, sing!

That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain;
Whose limbs unbury'd on the naked shore
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore.
Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,
Such was the sov'reign doom, and such the will of Jove.'

My readers, perceiving the pleasure I draw from the mere look of Greek, will quickly realise with what delight I came to Greece and with what dismay I saw the Piraeus. Could this appalling place be the port of Athens? Was this mean-looking shanty town, more wretched in looks than the worst shanty town I had seen in America, this incredibly nondescript, ugly and bungalow hole, the entrance to the Parthenon? . . . 'So this is Athens?' I said to myself sorrowfully, relapsing into a corner of the car and preparing to despond. Then I turned a corner and saw the Acropolis.

xxiii

My dream had come true. The beauty of which I had dreamt was actual. Mr. Charles Morgan precedes his novel *Sparkenbroke*, with a quotation from a letter written to Bailey by Keats, in which the poet says, 'I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the Heart's affections, and the truth of the Imagination. What the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be Truth. . . . The Imagination may be compared to Adam's dream, — he awoke and found it truth.' I came out of the Piraeus, affronted by its penurious appearance, and looked up and saw the Parthenon crowning the Acropolis. I awoke from my dream and found it truth. It was more beautiful than I had imagined it to be, and as I looked at it, I knew myself to be an Athenian, an unquenchable lover of Greece, knew what it was that sent Byron singing to Missolonghi to die, knew what it is that turns every civilised eye to this small, mountainous, almost barren country with the same conviction of satisfied spirit that the Moslem feels when he turns to Mecca, that moves the Christian when he sees the Cross. I did not feel myself an alien in Athens. There was no moment in Athens when I did not feel at home. I could make nothing of the names of the streets, but I liked them because they were in

Greek letters. As I drove past a college which was no better looking, if no worse, than any technical school at home, and saw youths emerging from it, I became, I now perceive, exceedingly mawkish and imagined them as Ion, the conceited actor, and Lysis, the pleasant lad who left his game of knucklebones to listen to Socrates, and Alcibiades, the dissolute, and Plato, whom I have learned to dislike, coming from the Academy so that they might go to the market-place to listen to the philosopher. But I fear their minds were full of newspapers and politics, and that they were hurrying, not to hear Socrates, but to gabble endlessly in cafés about the latest news from the Senate.

As I gazed at the prevailing Acropolis, I heard the chauffeur speaking to me. 'Yes?' I said, vaguely. He was pointing at a villa which looked like a substantial house in Wimbledon. 'That's where Princess Marina was born,' he exclaimed in reverential tones. 'Oh!' said I, looking again at the Acropolis.

It has to be seen. A picture cannot adequately reveal it. The Acropolis must be seen, not in pictures, but in fact, just as an orchestra must be heard, not by broadcast or gramophone, but in the concert hall. Like the sky-scrappers at Battery Point in New York, which never look well in photographs, it demands your eyes and will not fully reveal itself to cameras.

When I reached the foot of the great rock on which the Parthenon stands, I felt that *that* was as far as I was likely to get. I can climb a reasonable slope, but the Acropolis, like all good things, is not easily overcome: it requires an effort; and I feared it would be too much for me. For a moment or two I had a sickening fear that I had come so far only to be defeated, and that I should never ascend the Acropolis; but Sir Henry Lunn, who remembers everything and forgets nothing, had sworn an oath in heaven, I discovered, that he would have me conveyed to the Parthenon somehow, and as I came to the foot of the rock, two young Greeks, who looked like impoverished undergraduates, approached me, and, in a mixture of unusual English and eloquent gestures, invited me to sit in a chair and put my arms round their necks, which, feeling exceedingly conspicuous, I did. They then carried me to the top of the Acropolis with agility and ease that were astonishing. So skilful were they that I did not once feel any fear that I

might be precipitated from the Acropolis to the earth beneath. Indeed, I began to feel that I was being carried under false pretences, and that I might very well walk up the Parthenon; but my bearers would have none of this nonsense, nor, when feeling awful at the fatigue I might be causing them, I offered to walk some of the way, would they listen to me. They were not tired in the least. Carrying me was, I gathered, child's play. To show me how light I was, they leapt, or so they seemed to do, from rock to rock, and when, later in the morning, we descended the Acropolis, they came down almost at a run. Yet I felt no fear. As we trotted down that steep slope, occasionally turning an abrupt corner with a longish drop beneath it, I could have cheered myself and my bearers.

XXIV

And here I must moralise for a moment on the young men of Southern Europe. Wherever I went, from Spain to Palestine, I saw young men, obviously of quality, selling tourists' trash for a living. I am not expert in these matters, and cannot tell why these youths were peddling postcards and cheap trinkets, but the sight saddened me. Many of them appeared to be students who were, perhaps, supporting themselves through their university by selling sheets of postage stamps, lottery tickets, souvenirs and junk of all sorts, and I let myself be persuaded to buy rubbish that I dropped into the Mediterranean when no one was looking, because I felt that I might, in a small measure, be helping the scholarship of the world. I am not indifferent to the pleasure Mr. Morton describes of seeing joy irradiating a face when its owner, expecting to receive a penny, is given a shilling; and sometimes, in London, entirely out of caprice and for the fun of seeing that joy, I give a taximan a tip to which he has no claim. The pleasure I derive from speculating on the gusto with which he will tell his mates of his luck or the extra food to which he will treat himself at dinner-time or the swagger with which he will bestow the bounty on his wife, is enormous: all the more enormous because, generally speaking, I am mean about tips and contemptuous of those who take them. For a man should have his price, I say, and not depend on alms for his living.

I feel afraid of a world which has no better use to make of its young men than to let them hawk rubbish and sponge on travellers. In Istanbul, as the Turks now call Constantinople, shame possessed me when I saw decent looking lads, their hands full of picture postcards and souvenirs, running across the front of the beautiful Blue Mosque at an alarm of 'police!' The Turkish authorities are anxious to encourage tourist traffic, and try therefore, to save travellers from being badgered by hawkers and beggars — I cannot recollect being accosted by a single beggar in Istanbul — and so the enterprising and importunate student who tries to sell souvenirs to the tourist in the very doors of the Mosque is rightly harried by the police. But although I felt the rightness of this harrying, I felt ashamed to see it done. We should be able to do better than that with the young. I doubt if it is much fun being young and educated in these times, especially in Mediterranean towns. Thou hast the dew of thy youth, the Psalmist sang, but of what refreshment is it now?

Athens is crammed with educated youths for whom there is no work. They sit in cafés and become agitated, sufferers from the second of the two plagues of Greece, dust and politics, until at last they rebel against something and the streets are red with young blood. When there were riots in my own city of Belfast in 1935, the Special Correspondent of *The Times* informed his paper that 'the trouble is usually started by irresponsible young men. . . . The population, were it not moved by deep feelings, is a restless one, which finds it difficult to make good use of leisure at the best of times'. An ill-instructed and idle youth, though the idleness is due to no fault of its own, is a menace to the peace of any community, but an even greater menace is an instructed and idle youth which, finding no outlet for its energy in a profession and disdaining manual labour, is forced by boredom and indignation at its plight into revolutionary politics, not so much to remedy grievances as to give itself something to do. Everywhere we went, we heard rumours of discontented lads, discontent not because their ambition was greater than their ability, but because there was no employment for their energies.

Yet Greece, like all the lands on that littoral, is in great need of energy. There is work to be done, but those who might be

doing it are sitting over cups of undrinkable coffee reading newspapers, of which there were thirteen published in Athens in 1924, that ought to be unreadable. When I motored again past the Modern College where I had felt mawkish about the students who came out of it, I wondered to myself if it would not have been better to have set these lads tilling the land instead of turning them into briefless barristers and patientless doctors, all ready, because they are idle, to make any sort of trouble that will distract their thoughts from their poverty. In 1924, there were about 800 barristers in Athens which then had a population of 459,211; that is to say, there was one barrister to every five hundred and seventy-four Athenians. In the whole of Greece, the population of which, in 1924, was 6,204,684, there were about 600 judges, in addition to the eighteen members of the Areopagus or highest court of appeal; that is to say, one judge to every ten thousand Greeks. Doctors and disease are equally rife. 'With regard to the clergy,' says Dr. McClymont, 'comparatively few of them receive their education in Athens or pass through the University. Their average culture is very low – but not lower than their remuneration – and the consequence is that any influence the Church exerts on the life of the nation is of a superficial kind, and finds its chief support in the festive celebration of the numerous Saints' Days. The services in the churches are of a ritualistic order, and sermons are seldom heard except in Lent. The kissing of an *eikon* or the lighting of a taper appears to be with many worshippers a mere formality, while, at the same time, there is a large amount of ignorance and superstition in the country districts.' If the British people were as lavishly lawyered as the Greeks, there would be fourteen thousand barristers in *London alone*, and nearly five thousand judges in Great Britain and Ireland.

It is a queer fact that the smaller and newer an organised community is, the more extravagant it is in officials. In the Six Counties of Ulster, which are governed from Belfast, and have a population, according to the 1931 census, of 1,250,000, officials are epidemic. There is a Governor-General, a Cabinet of seven persons, and a Parliament of fifty-two members, whose salaries and allowances amount to £33,600. Each minister has a Department, with a full complement of able and expensive

Civil Servants. A Parliament House, which cost £650,000, has been built. The Judicature consists of five High Court Judges, whose combined salaries are £20,000. There is seldom enough work for one judge! . . . The Irish Free State, with a population of 2,949,000, has a Governor-General,¹ a Cabinet of ten persons and a Judicature of nine. These Judges cost the Irish Free State £25,000 per annum. England and Wales, with a population of 39,947,931, manage to rub along with only thirty-three High Court Judges, whose combined salaries are £174,000 a year. There is a High Court Judge to every 250,000 Ulstermen, every 327,666 Free Staters, every 372,000 Scots, and every 1,210,543 English and Welsh men!

There is an even more mortifying and expensive result of decentralisation to be seen in Canada, where the vanity of elected persons, who must maintain the dignity of their position at all costs to the taxpayers, is terrific. The total population of the Dominion is 8,788,483. It apparently requires the attention of 150 Judges: a Judge, that is to say, to every 60,000 Canadians! In addition to the Dominion Government, there is a Government in each of the nine Provinces; that is to say, nine local Parliaments, nine Lieutenant-Generals, nine Cabinets, nine Judicatures, and nine sets of permanent officials, in addition to the Governor-General, Parliament, Cabinet, Judicature and permanent officials of the Dominion Government. Three of the Provinces have each an Agent-General in London, in addition to the High Commissioner for Canada. Prince Edward's Island has a population of 88,615, which is rather more than the population of York and rather less than that of Wigan. It has a Lieutenant-Governor, an Executive Council, and a Legislative Assembly. It also has four Judges, one to every 22,000 inhabitants! Australia has seven parliaments for 6,000,000 people. South Africa has 1,700,000 white inhabitants and four parliaments. London, which is inhabited by considerably more than eight million people, lives on its share of the Imperial Parliament, but if it were as eager to be governed as Canada appears to be, it would have ten parliaments to itself.

¹ It may not have him by the time this book is published. Spiritually, and almost physically speaking, he has been dead for several years. Mr. de Valera has only to bury the corpse when he can find time to do so.

There has, I am told, been a reaction in Greece against the system of education which results in an excess of lawyers and doctors and an insufficiency of industrialists and educated farmers; and an increasing number of youths, in spite of the Government grants, are abstaining from the University and entering industry. This, undoubtedly, is for the good of Greece at the moment, but it is a pity to let people imagine that although higher education is useful to doctors and lawyers it is useless to industrialists and farmers. A university education will not turn a bad farmer into a good one, but it will enable a good farmer to become better. The *distribution* of higher education in most countries is uneven, and the man who needs it most, the farmer, is the man who obtains the least, if, indeed, he obtains any at all. The singular doctrine that a man can grow cabbages with no other aid than that of inner light is as widespread as it is silly.

xxv

On reaching the Parthenon, I saw Athens spread in front of me, looking unimaginably lovely, despite the ugly streets that stretch to the very foot of the Acropolis itself, and found myself more absorbed in the colour of the country than I was in its ancient remains. I have no hope of putting that colour into words, and shall not try to, nor shall I work myself into an ecstasy about the Parthenon, though I could easily become dithyrambic about it, for that has been done often enough and much better than I can do it. There are experiences which cannot be communicated: they must be shared. No one who stayed at home can ever understand the mystical sense of comradeship which soldiers in the Great War feel. It makes an English soldier feel more intimate with a German soldier than he feels with a Briton who, for whatever reason, good or bad, did not serve in the line. A shared experience has given enemies a sympathy with each other that they cannot ever feel with civilians of their own blood. A man who has stood on the Acropolis and seen the Parthenon cannot convey his sense of fulfilment to those who have not stood there and have not seen the Parthenon.

It was oddly satisfying, and yet surprising, to me to listen

to one of my young Greeks informing me that that place over there was the prison in which Socrates was confined and poisoned. If eternity, as Frederick Denison Maurice said, is not time extended, but time abolished, then I was in eternity that morning on the Acropolis. Listening to the boy, and aware that I was surrounded by my countrymen and women and that the year was 1936, I felt the centuries slip away, and saw the little processions of anxious friends going to that prison to visit Socrates, some of them, like Crito, to beg him to run away. Crito was a business man, and business men have seldom hobnobbed with philosophers. It is, therefore, the pleasanter for that fact to think on Crito who was willing to risk the loss of his money and his life in an attempt to bribe the gaoler to let Socrates escape. There were, it seemed, other business men no less ready than Crito to help. Are there business men now who would adventure all they possess, even their lives, to help a learned man or an artist to save his life? Was there a German Crito who was willing to take risks for Einstein?

Close to the Acropolis stands the Areopagus, or Mars' Hill, where, I was reminded, St. Paul one morning in the year A.D. 50, twenty years before the Temple was destroyed in Jerusalem, after 'reasoning', as was his wont everywhere, in the Agora or market-place, stood up, on the invitation of the Epicureans and Stoics, and testified to the queer faith he had been preaching in and about Athens for some time. He had, as usual, been in trouble. Sceptical Jews in Thessalonica which we call Salonica, had taken 'unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort', whom they had persuaded or bribed to create an uproar outside the house of Jason, a leader among the Christians in that city. The police, as is customary with these officers, arrested, not the lewd fellows of the baser sort, but Jason and other unoffending Christians, and led them before the magistrates, who made them enter into bail for their good behaviour and let them go. This riot frightened the brethren so much that they begged Paul and Silas to leave Thessalonica at once, and sent them to Berea, whither, however, they were followed by the Jews who had persecuted them in Thessalonica. The Berean brethren were wilier than the Thessalonians, and they kept Silas and also Timotheus in their town, and pretended to put Paul in a ship and send him to sea.

But they took him to Athens, and there the apostle at once began to dispute 'in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met him'.

It was in the course of his public disputations that the philosophers encountered him. 'And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the Resurrection.' This doctrine of a life after death was odd in the ears of the Greek. 'Of an after-life,' Sir Richard Livingstone says in *The Greek Genius and Its Meaning to Us*, 'he had the vaguest ideas,' and such as he had were in no way consoling.

'Homer had spoken of asphodel meadows, where, bloodless and unhappy, flit the ghosts of those who were once so full of life; where Achilles could say that he would rather be a labourer on the tiniest of human farms than a king over the dead. And not less gloomy, if less definite than this, is the conception of a future life which dominates Greek literature:

'Here are characteristic sentiments from different centuries. "When a man is dead all his glory is gone." He is "dust and ashes; what is nought turns to nothing". He has "no strength nor veins that throb with blood". "What of the underworld?" asks an epitaph of a man over whom it is set. "Deep darkness," comes the reply. Better so, thinks Macaria, the Athenian girl who gives up her life that the suppliant children of Hercules may live. "I pray that there may be nothing below the earth; if we mortals that are to die have sorrow even there, I know not where to turn; for death is thought the supreme medicine for misfortune." At best there was a sickening uncertainty [expressed in the following quotation made by Sir Richard from Professor Gilbert Murray's translation of *The Hippolytus of Euripides*]:

"If any far-off state there be,
Dearer to life than mortality;
The hand of the Dark hath hold thereof,
And mist is under and mist above.
And so we are sick for life and cling
On earth to this nameless and shining thing,
For other life is a fountain sealed,
And the depths below are unrevealed,
And we drift on legends ever."

The little tentmaker from Tarsus, whose bodily presence, as

he himself said, was weak and his speech contemptible, by which he probably meant that he had a provincial accent, came announcing his singular news, that a young workman who had been executed in Jerusalem in the manner reserved for criminals and slaves, was the resurrected Son of God, and that there was a future life of everlasting loveliness for all who would believe on him; and his announcement excited the greatest amusement and interest in Athens. The Epicureans and the Stoics:

‘took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you! . . .’

Then follows a tremendous summarised Pauline utterance. ‘And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them’ and went to Corinth.

It was on that hill over there, just behind the Odeon, that Paul pronounced his faith to the Epicureans and the Stoics and, despite the derision of many, caused ‘certain men’ to cleave unto him and believe in the resurrection of the dead to life everlasting and glorious: ‘among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.’

One of the Greeks who had carried me to the top of the Acropolis, plucked wild-flowers from the ground beneath the Caryatides and gave them to me. His companion found a piece of white marble on the floor of the Parthenon. It lies now on my desk. They had been hired to chair a stranger up this rock, and they were poor, but they had no sense of servility, nor did they show any signs that they felt themselves degraded because they had to make a few drachmas as bearers. It was a way of living, and one way is as good as another, provided you think so. Their attitude towards their work rebuked

me for seeing students at such a job. They did not slink into corners to conceal their shame, nor did they display hatred, envy and all uncharitableness to those who employed them. They did not, as fools do, despise their living.

Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, in *From Olympus to the Styx*, lament that the Greeks, when their freedom was secured to them by the Allied Powers in 1833 and they were ruled for a few years by a Bavarian prince, Otho, did not abandon Athens as their capital, establishing authority in Nauplia instead. The sentiment which urged them to restore Athens to its ancient authority was, they say, 'very understandable', but that fact ought not to reconcile us to it. Athens, though well placed for a capital in ancient times, is now less suitable to be a capital than any other city in Europe, and on the ground of convenience alone, some other city or site should have been chosen. The Southern Irish had sentimental reasons for ejecting the Bank of Ireland from the ancient House of Parliament on College Green, but they had enough sense to keep sentiment in subordination to necessity, and took their politicians to Merrion Square. If the Greeks had been less sentimental and more practical, the Acropolis would not now be surrounded by numerous examples of the jerry-builder's art. It is an insoluble puzzle to me how men, with beauty before them, can create ugliness. There is a village in Dorset where the speculative builder has heaped his scabrous bricks beside stone cottages that stay the spirit and comfort the eye with their beauty. I know a hillside in Devon whose loveliness is every day defiled by bungalows of indescribable ugliness. One might suppose that men could at least preserve the loveliness they see, though they may never create any, but it seems that most of them cannot. There are even criminal fools who try to condone the destruction of beauty and its replacements by ugliness by saying that we get used to ugliness. As if that were not an aggravation of the crime.

Yet I doubt if we should like to see Athens kept as a museum through which bored tourists tripped. It is alive, not dead, and its beauty remains, even if its skirts are defiled. We must put up with the penalties of life if we demand the privileges. Our dream of a world inhabited by cultured people who will preserve the past for the enrichment of the future, making a

present that will be no less than the past, is one which may come true because we hold it dear, but those who strive for success must run the risk of failure. The dream may not come true. That the Acropolis should have survived at all is a miracle. There can be few noble buildings in the world which have so often been in danger of destruction as the Parthenon; and those who did it the greatest damage were seldom savages. It probably suffered its severest injuries in the hundred and fifty years before the monarchy was established than in all the other centuries since it was built. It almost sustained irreparable injury after its king was crowned, when a German architect called Schinkel proposed, according to Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, to build a royal palace on it!

The following account of the misfortunes which befell the Acropolis in those hundred and fifty years appears in *From Olympus to the Styx*:

'In 1687 arrived Francesco Morosini the Venetian, fresh from overrunning the Peloponnesus. The Turks pulled in pieces the temple of Nike (restored in 1835) to build a breastwork for six cannon before the Propylaea. The first Venetian idea was to undermine the Acropolis and blow the whole rock sky-high. That would doubtless have been ideal; but the rock proved too hard. Then their batteries came into action from the Museum, the Nymphæum, the Areopagus, and also from the east of the Acropolis. To stop them, a Turkish deserter warned the Venetians that they were in danger of destroying the whole Parthenon, as the Turks had their powder stores there (they really kept only a day's supply in the temple itself). The Venetians were delighted to hear it and concentrated their mortars on the unfortunate building. The siege had begun on April 22nd; it was not till the evening of the 27th that a German lieutenant succeeded in putting a bomb straight through the room on to the fatal powder. The Parthenon, which but for that might still be as intact to-day as the Theseum, had roof and both sides blown out. Two hundred Turks were destroyed; and for two days after a fire raged on the Acropolis. A little later, the fortress surrendered; then after six months the Venetians, harassed by the Turks and the plague, decided they could not hold Athens after all. Fortunately they had not time to carry out their project of destroying the walls of the Acropolis. But Morosini was not yet satisfied. He thought the horses from the west pediment of the Parthenon would go well with the Roman horses of St. Mark, brought nearly seven centuries before by another Morosini from the sack of Constantinople; but his

sailors were so unhandy that they dropped them sixty feet on to the pavement, where they were shivered in pieces. Instead of his horses Morosini had to be content with three stone lions.'

The thought of that Turk, appalled at the prospect of seeing the Parthenon blown to smithereens, attempting to save the monument by appealing to the finer sensibilities of the威尼斯人 in vain, affords the cynic occasion for wry, if not derisive, laughter. Let us hope there is a hell in which the Morosinis of the world will roast forever. It was a German officer who blew the roof and sides off the great building: a preparation, perhaps, for the cultured effort which laid the Cloth Hall at Ypres in a heap of broken rubble two hundred and twenty-seven years later; but we may, perhaps, pardon him in some measure when we remember that persistent Mecklenburgian, Heinrich Schliemann, who loved Homer and, in spite of the greatest discouragement and derision from expert and erudite archaeologists and scholars, who said that Troy was a myth, found the remains of the Trojan city and raised the dead from Mycenae. The Greeks, remembering Morosini's efforts to save them from the Turks, must heartily wish that the fellow had remained in Venice. But for him, the Parthenon would still be intact and the horses would be prancing on the west pediment.

I turned reluctantly away from the Parthenon, serenely beautiful even in its ruin, and entered the Museum, which I left with one piece of carving irremovably fixed in my memory: the headless *Victory Fastening Her Sandal*. There are other pieces of statuary as lovely as this in the Acropolis Museum, but, in my recollection, it triumphs over all of them. How beautiful the Victory is, how finely her form is revealed through the folds of her long draperies as she stoops to tie her sandal straps. What a thing is man that he can make marble and stone obedient to his imagination! Well might Pindar cry:

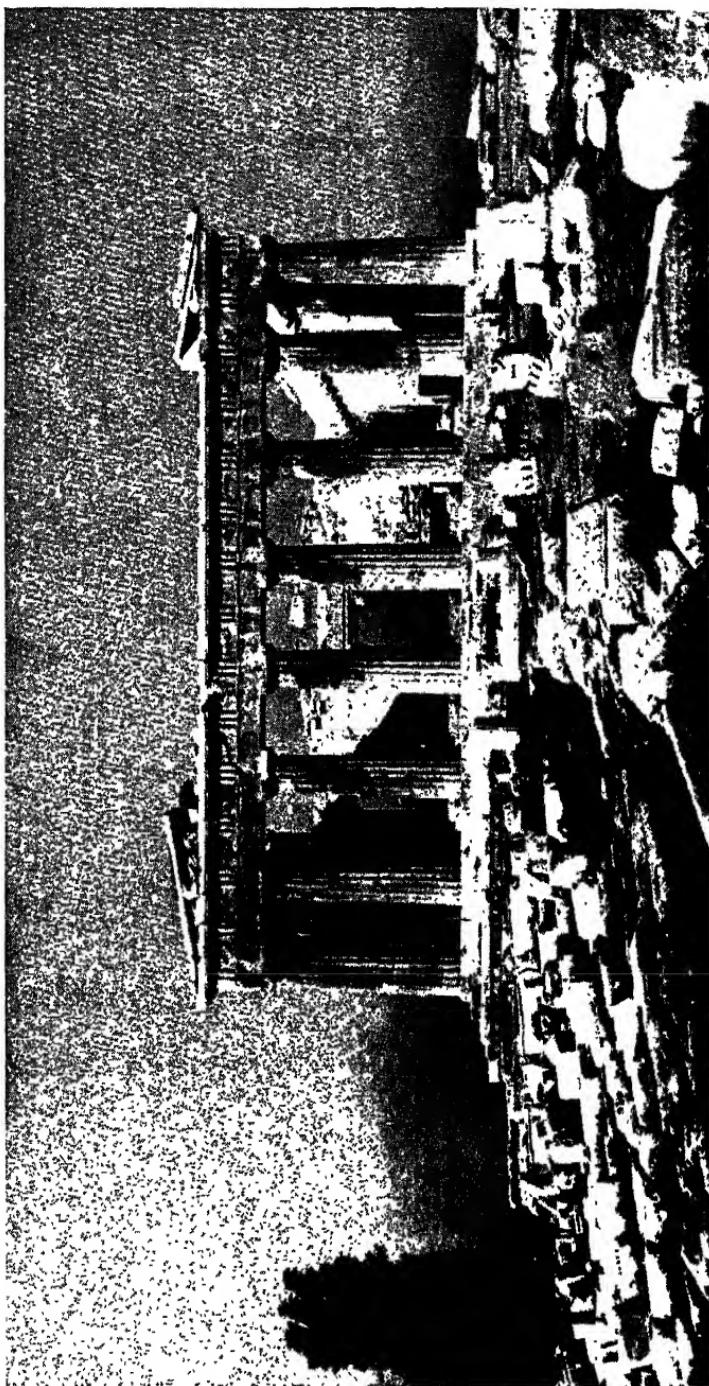
'Ah, what is man? What not? A shadow's dream.
And yet when, given of God, there comes a gleam
Of glory, *that* is the light of life, the honey of our days.'

How singular, too, the vanity of man's arrogance seems when we recall how little Thucydides thought of the temples and Aeschylus in comparison with the wars the Athenians fought, how

Pericles, whose age was glorified by Phidias, imagined that the poetry and architecture and sculpture of his time would appear of less importance to posterity than the spirit of his soldiers. 'Know that our city has the greatest name in all the world because she has never yielded to misfortunes, but sacrificed more lives and endured more hardships in war than any other. Even if we should be compelled at last to abate something of our greatness, yet will the recollection live, that of all Hellenes we ruled over the greatest number of Hellenic subjects; that we withstood our enemies, whether single or united, in the most terrible wars, and that we were the inhabitants of a city endowed with every sort of wealth and enterprise. The indolent may criticise, but the enterprising will emulate, and the unsuccessful envy us.' When Pericles encounters Phidias in the courts of heaven, he must feel abashed when, remembering his poor boast, he meets the sculptor's eye; for what is left of all that wealth and military glory that Pericles acclaimed? Phidias and Polyclitus, Plutarch strangely remarked, were great sculptors; but what gentleman would wish to be either of them? The inane question reminds us of the folly of Congreve who, when he was visited by Voltaire, wished to be remembered, not as a dramatist, but as a country gentleman, and was assured by Voltaire that if that were all he had been Voltaire would not have troubled to seek him out. The works of Phidias survive, ruined though they are, to remind us that the imagination of man is more than his wealth and slaughter.

This nation, the source from which western civilisation flowed, destroyed itself with silly wars. Athens boasted in 458 B.C. that it had lost its youth and valour on many fronts, Aegina, Cyprus, Egypt, Halieis, Megara and Phoenice. The Spartans, a sour and stupid people, whose courage only serves to make their stupidity the more dreadful, loved soldiering so dearly that any child which looked unlikely to become a beefy warrior was exposed on the slopes of Taygetus or thrown into a cave called Caeadas, into which also were cast criminals. They thus exposed the mind of Sparta, leaving only the body, and the body, divorced from the mind, brought Sparta to the dust. Their record of great men, even among soldiers, is almost empty. Too much praise has been bestowed upon the Spartans, who were a mean and greedy and dishonest lot,

training their young, as Xenophon reminds us in *Anabasis*, to regard theft as dishonourable only when it is discovered; though perhaps dishonesty ceases to be dishonesty when it is general and expected. To know that your neighbour will rob you, given half a chance, and to be ready to rob him at the first opportunity, knowing that the only disgrace is to be found out, is almost honesty! The Greeks, in our eyes, seem destitute of patriotic feeling. 'Treachery,' says Mr. Lavell, 'was one of the commonest phenomena in Greek history, sometimes springing from personal ambition, greed or resentment, sometimes from party spirit. One often feels that to the average Greek he himself came first, his party second, and after his city – nothing. Loyalty to Hellas was aroused only when danger threatened the freedom he so greatly prized, and not always then. Again and again a Greek betrayed his party and his city alike for the sake of selfish advantage, his city for the sake of his party, Hellas for the sake of self, party or city.' 'The ruse of Themistocles,' he goes on to say, 'when by pretended treachery he induced the invaders to attack Salamis, succeeded so well simply because Xerxes was perfectly aware that there was nothing strange in the idea of even so notable a leader betraying his people. The exiled Alcibiades went to Sparta and gave counsel whereby his own city could be defeated, to be welcomed back by Athens a little later with but little sign of resentment. The Spartan Demaratus was one of the advisers of Xerxes during the great invasion. In the last campaigns of the Peloponnesian War both sides bid eagerly for Persian support, and Persian gold aided materially in securing Sparta's victory.' Patriotism, it seems, is a matter of opinion. The Athenians thought little of Alcibiades' ratting to the Spartans after they had superseded him, and received him without rancour when the trouble had ended; but we should have felt unquenchably bitter against Lord French if, after he had been superseded by Haig, he had gone over to the Germans and betrayed all our plans. We should not have presented him with the freedom of London had he returned to Great Britain after the War; we should have shot him. We hanged Sir Roger Casement for less than Alcibiades did. On the other hand, Lord Rothermere, that astonishing paper peer, publicly applauded, amid shrill cries of approval from ageing



THE PARTHENON, ATHENS
From a photograph by H. V. Morton

spinsters, Roman Catholics and superannuated colonels, Spanish gentlemen who led Moors against their countrymen and murdered in Badajos prisoners of war in hundreds. Patriotism, indeed, as Dr. Johnson asserted, is the last refuge of a scoundrel, but we must not attribute to the virtue the vices of those who exploit it. Their lack of patriotism in the end helped to bring the Greeks to the ground.

The Spartans loved money and took bribes even from their enemies; they could not forget Sparta to remember Greece, preferring, in their envy of Athens, to help the Persians against their kin. It was not their warring against other people that destroyed them, nor can they be blamed for that, since it was forced upon them more often than not, but their warring among themselves. 'Can we imagine a state of society,' says Dean Inge, 'in which farmers and rustics of Berkshire, headed by the Lord-Lieutenant, attack Oxford in the slack season and burn the barges on the river; in retaliation for which two thousand Oxford undergraduates cross the river and cut down my apple-trees? This is a very mild illustration of the normal conditions among the little Greek cantons.' We may not, perhaps, be able to imagine such folly happening to-day, but it happened more recently in England than it happened in Hellas; and, although the War of the Roses was not fought between the counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire in the territorial sense, it was fought almost in those terms. Southern Irishmen were killing each other only a few years ago, but Southern Irishmen, of course, have not yet heard that the War of the Roses is over. The end of all the soldiering in Greece was the reduction of Athens to a population of a few hundreds when, in 1833, the Turks were expelled and the Greeks were given a king.

xxvi

The Parthenon was the principal sight I saw that morning, and I must not, therefore, inflict on my readers mugged-up accounts of the Propylaea, the Erechtheum, and the lovely little temple of Athena Nike. It is not possible to comprehend the Acropolis in a morning nor in a month, and I was not visiting Greece — I was only dropping in on my way to Jerusalem; and I record, therefore, first impressions, and am not

proposing myself in any sense of the term as a guide to other people. The excellent Baedeker can do better for those who want information, while Mr. and Mrs. Lucas can give them the spirit of Greece as I, were I familiar with the scene, could not hope to do. Christopher Wordsworth's *Greece: Pictorial, Descriptive and Historical*, is still invaluable to the visitor.¹ 'Not at Athens alone are we to look for Athens,' the poet's nephew says. The epitaph — *Here is the heart: the spirit is everywhere* — may be applied to it. From the gates of its Acropolis, as from a mother city, issued intellectual colonies into every region of the world. These buildings now before us, ruined as they are at present, have served for two thousand years as models for the most admired fabrics in every civilised country of the world. Having perished here, they survive there. They live in them, as in their legitimate offspring. Thus the genius which conceived and executed these magnificent works, while the materials on which it laboured are dissolved, has itself proved immortal. We, therefore, at the present time, having witnessed this fact, have more cogent reasons for admiring the consummate skill which created them than were possessed by those who saw these structures in their original glory and beauty:

'Again, not merely in her *material* productions, existing here or elsewhere, does the spirit of Athens survive. Not in her Buildings and her Statues, nor in the imitations of them which are the ornaments of other nations, but also in the purely intellectual creations of her great Minds, is it to be found: it is to be traced in those writings of her Poets, Historians, Philosophers, and Orators, which remain unimpaired by time, and not merely live themselves, but have served as the source of life to others; whose worth could never be estimated till many centuries had elapsed, and who, having now been judged by

¹ There is, of course, a vast library of literature on Greece and the Greeks and no one, unless he devotes his life to the subject, can hope to read the whole of it; but the following very short list of books, in addition to those named in the text, may prove useful to visitors: *Greece*, painted by John Fulleylove and described by the Rt. Rev. J. A. McClymont; *Wanderings in Greece* by F. S. Burnell; *A Biography of the Greek People* by Cecil Fairfield Lavell; *Everyday Things in Ancient Greece* by Marjorie and C. H. B. Quennell; *Classical Sculpture* by A. W. Lawrence; *The Pageant of Greece* by Sir Richard Livingstone; *The Greek View of Life and Plato and his Dialogues* by G. Lowes Dickinson; *A Glimpse of Greece* by Edward Hutton; *Greece and the Aegean* by Ernest A. Gardner; *Greek Salad: An Autobiography of Greek Travel* by Kenneth Matthews; and *Isles of the Aegean* by L. C. Scott O'Connor. The last-named book, which is beautifully produced, is, at the time of writing, out of print and is difficult to obtain, except, of course, from libraries.

posterity to be worthy of immortality, have given an interest to the soil from which they sprung, to the ground which they trod, and to the temples in which they worshipped, which these objects did not, and could not, possess, as long as the memory of those was recent from whom they derived it. The city of Miltiades, Themistocles, and Pericles, of *Æschylus, Thucydides, Plato and Demosthenes*, could not have been regarded, *as such*, by their contemporaries or immediate successors, with those feelings of veneration which *we* experience, who know what influence they have exercised, and will never cease to maintain, over the thoughts and deeds of men. In this respect, – and it is a very important one, – the *modern* spectator of Athens enjoys advantages for a contemplation of this city, which were never known to its ancient inhabitants.

‘We feel, therefore, a lively sensation of pleasure in tracing, step by step, the vestiges of this place, in examining its topographical details, in exploring the sites of its former buildings, and in studying the character of those which remain; for thus we seem to be brought into the society of men whose names will never perish; thus we appear ourselves to imbibe a portion of that spirit which animated them, and produced the works which have raised their authors from the level of common minds to a loftier elevation of their own.’

I came down from the Acropolis, borne by the young Greeks, who must have practised the instruction of the ancients to cultivate their bodies as well as their minds, so skilful and agile and easy were their movements, and parted from them on terms of amity that were to be renewed with pleasure at Daphni the next morning, as I shall presently record, so far as one of them was concerned. The descent, however, was sorrowful for me. To leave that great rock with so little of its beauty absorbed was a misery not easily endured; and I envied Mrs. Arthur Rowntree, who told me that she had enjoyed an experience undergone by few: the privilege of being locked in the Acropolis one night, and of being released only after a custodian had been summoned from the city.

I should not complain of such imprisonment, even on a cold night, but would gladly surrender to the ghosts of all who might haunt the Acropolis, even to the ghosts of those who tried to hurt it; for who would not be glad of a chance to rebuke a delinquent spectre for the wrong he did when he was alive or listen to his confession of his sins. It is my pleasure now and then to visualise the encounters in heaven or in hell of those who did

wrong with those to whom the wrong was done. It must have been an embarrassing moment when Queen Victoria, freed from her prejudices, met Mr. Gladstone in the corridors of heaven. Or was it? May not the release we there receive from bodily bias make all encounters supremely pleasant? I like to think of the Queen meeting Mr. Gladstone with that winsome smile she had, and saying, 'I treated you very badly, and I'm sorry to say Disraeli isn't quite the fascinating man I thought he was. Are you, Dizzy?' To which Disraeli will reply, 'Well, ma'am, I had to humbug you a bit to get my way, and if William here had humbugged you, too, he would have had a much happier time on earth.' Then the Grand Old Man, whose reputation is blown upon by people who know little about him or are incapable of forming any but the shallowest opinions, will draw himself up to the full length of his spirit, and say, 'Ma'am, I was a trial myself, but I am in heaven, as I was on earth, your respectful and obedient servant!' I should like to see Lord Elgin and Morosini meeting Phidias and Praxiteles on the floor of the Parthenon. It would enthrall me to hear Socrates teasing Plato for the puritanical prig he was — Socrates who drank most of his companions under the table, at an all-night sitting, and then, having bathed, went down to the market-place and debated all day with any who would discourse. And I should like to hear Phidias expatiating to Pericles and Plutarch and Thucydides on the relative merits of soldiers and sculptors! . . .

From the Acropolis we walked down the broad road to the Theatre of Dionysus, scooped out of the rock at the foot of the Acropolis, and here I indulged an interest that was special to me among those who were there that morning; for I wanted to know whether the reputation the ancient Greek theatres have for good acoustics was deserved. It was, so far as this theatre, the only one I entered in Greece, is concerned. Sitting in a stone seat, more comfortable than the padded stalls of many West End theatres, I heard distinctly Canon Wigram's account of the theatre, though he had his back turned to me and I was sitting at some distance from him.

Now those who know about acoustics, for example, the authors of *Planning for Good Acoustics*, Mr. Hope Bagenal and Mr. Alexander Wood, assert that it is an exact science, and

that there is no excuse for a building in which hearing is defective on account of its structure. So do the heads of the fine school of architecture in Liverpool University, which was formerly led by Professor Charles Reilly and is now led by Professor Lionel Budden. Yet it is notorious that many of the theatres that have been erected in the West End of London since the outbreak in 1918 of the most violent peace the world has ever known, are almost useless for the performance of plays because of acoustical troubles. In Liverpool itself there is a theatre, built since 1918, in which there are, or were, pools of silence. Nor is this trouble with acoustics confined to theatres – County Hall, the seat of the London County Council, was notorious for its ability to render any speaker inaudible – or to buildings in Great Britain. Architects everywhere have designed expensive buildings which defeat the function for which they were erected; and managers, enraged by the waste of their money on architects who do not realise that one of the purposes of a theatre is to enable those who sit in the auditorium to hear what is said on the stage, are thinking of scrapping their opera-glasses and supplying ear trumpets instead. How hollow seemed this talk about progress when, sitting on a stone seat in the Theatre of Dionysus and hearing admirably the dulcet tones of Canon Wigram addressed to the foot of the Acropolis, we realised that the Greeks, about 2,500 years ago, knew how to build a great theatre – it seated from 14,000 to 17,000 spectators – in which every word could be distinctly heard.

I strolled about the stage, and sat in seats that still bore the names of the officials who were entitled to sit in them at performances, sat, too, in the seat of the Priest of Dionysus himself; feeling as lofty for a moment or two as I might were I to sit on the King's throne or the Archbishop's chair in Canterbury Cathedral. Should I have felt any thrill of an historic occasion had I been present in this theatre at the first performance of an Aeschylean tragedy? Who knew what was happening that night when *Hamlet* was produced for the first time?

In this theatre the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides received their premières, and Aristophanes, the comedian, was allowed without let or hindrance to poke fun at the tragedians and to guy Socrates himself. But that is less creditable to the Greeks than it seems, for Aristophanes, like

all comic authors, was a cynical Conservative and afraid of anybody who hinted at wrong and attempted innovations. Were he alive to-day, he would almost certainly collapse into the Roman Catholic Church and go about whacking himself on the chest and drinking great quantities of beer from enormous tankards in Sussex. 'Ho for the jolly Old Down, brothers, and ha for the jolly old wind in the jolly old hedge, brothers, and ho, ha, ho for the jolly old Roman Catholic Church, brothers! . . .' Such is the song which is sometimes sung by gentlemen who study peasant life in Fleet Street and mistake the smell of printers' ink for the smell of the heath, brothers! . . .

Humorists are often timid reactionaries, ready to give liberty away with a jest. They put up with what is because they have no hope of anything better, and are reluctant to believe that any cause is worth a fight. The prophet who denounces our offences and follies, does us the honour to believe that we may be better than we are, but the humorist who tells us that it will be all the same in a hundred years affronts us with his assumption that we are irretrievably damned. The English are sometimes found in fault because they cannot abide satire, and I sometimes hear young men, either jejune or sadistic, complaining of *Punch* because its fun is usually kind. Why, they demand, have we no paper like *The New Yorker*? Yet even they admit that incessant sneers are more wearisome than continual good temper and easy-going ways. We quickly tire of the man who always makes fun of other people, partly because we know that he is certain to sulk if other people make fun of him. Like the Southern Irishman, he can laugh at his neighbour but not at himself. Your humorist is usually a suspicious-minded man, unwilling to move away from familiar things. Comedians, I have observed, develop melancholia, and many of them die in the lunatic asylum. Those that keep their wits are a great burden to their relatives, always cracking their jokes and casting gloom over any proceedings. They despair of everything and everybody. 'That won't be any good!' is the comment they most often make. They foresee failure, and seldom, if ever, foresee success. 'It'll be all the same in a hundred years!' I doubt if Aristophanes died as well as Socrates did, and I feel certain he could not have died in the *way* that Socrates died. He was the natural ally of

oppressors, whom he aided by mocking the prophets. The children who jeered at Elisha because of his bald head were incipient humorists, and deserved to be eaten by she-bears.

The authorities were ready to let Aristophanes sneer his fill, since he wanted to sneer only at Euripides and Socrates and their cranky life; but they were less tolerant of comedians who sneered at them. Even Pericles was occasionally tempted to play the tyrant and to suppress irreverent critics. 'It seems that during the excitement of the Samian War,' says Bury in his *History of Greece*:

'Pericles deemed it expedient to place some restraint upon the licence of the comic drama. What he feared was the effect which the free criticisms of the comic poets on his policy might have, not upon the Athenians themselves, but upon the strangers who were present in the theatre, and especially upon the citizens of the subject states. The precaution showed that the situation was critical; though the restraints were withdrawn as soon as possible, for they were contrary to the spirit of the time. Henceforward the only check on the comic poet was that he *might* be prosecuted before the Council of Five Hundred for "doing wrong to the public", if his jests against the officers of the people went too far. . . .'

In other and modern words, to make fun of Hitler is to make fun of Germany; to jest about Mussolini is 'to do wrong to the' Italian 'people'; to say that Stalin is not stainless steel is to offend against Russia. But even in the most tyrannous monarchies, a cat could laugh at a king. We are too willing to believe that the gang of politicians which happens to be in power is *the state*, but we are less willing to believe this than are the members of the gang themselves, and they, having authority to punish those who deny their infallibility, are more likely to claim that a wrong done to them is a wrong done to the people.

xxvii

I spent the afternoon in museums, which are a weariness of the flesh to me, and in the evening, anxious to learn something of the Greece that is alive, I went to a tavern to dine with Mr. and Mrs. Morton, who were entertaining some Greeks. Earlier in the day I had encountered a young Greek who, having been a Republican, was now a Royalist. His conversion was caused

by the King who had shown his determination to be King, not of a party, but of the Hellenes. His Majesty's return to Athens had been coldly witnessed by the working classes who, however, now feel affection for him. They have learnt to respect his impartiality. Listening to this young Greek, I remembered the Englishman who declared that King George II had had extraordinary luck in the death, so soon after the restoration, of General Kondylis. It was this soldier, a dictator, too, who brought the King back to Greece, but the King was not at all disposed to let himself become a pawn in the hands of General Kondylis and, at the risk of being accused of ingratitude, he firmly put the General in his place. His action might have involved him in grave trouble, for Kondylis was an arbitrary man, but death smote the soldier and set the sovereign free.

His Majesty has a hard task to perform. His country is small and poor – great tracts of it are barren – and his people have fallen from a high estate. To bring them back to the measure and the stature of the fullness of their ancestors may prove more than any man can perform, but it is believed by his subjects that the King has the will to try. They believe, too, that George II of Greece learnt much from George V of England. His Majesty was in London when the Silver Jubilee was celebrated, and was deeply impressed by the unexampled display of affection then shown by the British people for their sovereign; an affection that would have been heartrending had they known that he was a dying man. I was told by a Greek I met outside Athens that my King had advised his King how to behave if he should be recalled to the throne of Greece, and that the wise course George II was then following had been taken not only because His Majesty is wise in himself, but because he had taken the wisdom of an old and experienced King to heart. I do not pretend to have any knowledge of these matters, and I report only what I heard in casual conversation, but these statements were confirmed to me by other Greeks to whom I mentioned them.

The King of Greece is young, only four years older than Edward VIII, but he has learnt, with the Psalmist, how blessed are they . . . who, going through the vale of misery, use it for a well. The ancient Greeks wasted their youth and valour in a succession of absurd wars, and brought their great civilisation

to wreck and ruin, and war in our own time has broken again the shards that the ancients left. A king without courage might quail when he looked at this kingdom and remembered the heights from which it has fallen, to which he must try to raise it; but King George II has courage and has shown it. The fall of Kondylis may yet appear to be the first step upward made by Greece. The western world still lives on the bounty of the ancient Greeks. It may presently find itself living on the bounty of the modern Greeks.

In the tavern to which Mr. Jock Stewart and I went to dine with Mr. and Mrs. Morton, I found assembled four Greeks: Mr. Demetrius Sophocles Travlos, his wife, whose name is Persephone, his sister-in-law, Cornelia, a shy girl who was once a dancer in the Russian Ballet, and Mr. Alexander Philadelpheus, the Director of the National Museum, whose father was called Themistocles Philadelpheus. Mr. and Mrs. Lucas record a visit they paid to a public-house in Charváti-Mycenae, called 'The Inn of the Beautiful Helen, Wife of Menelaus', a name which makes me wonder why no publican in England has ever thought of calling his house 'Lovely Anne Boleyn's Inn' or 'The Inn of the Beautiful Jane Shore'. 'Orestes, the son of the house, followed by his brother Agamemnon, welcomed us in to dry ourselves in the kitchen, where their mother, a matron with a blue kerchief over her head and the calm dignity of the Demeter of Cnidus, was frying potatoes over a fire of little sticks.' If I were that Orestes' mother, I should be careful to reveal my identity to him every time we met! . . . It is at once absurd and inevitable that we should feel astonished at meeting Greeks who bear classical names as ordinarily as we bear names of Elizabeth and William and Mary. We are astonished because we subconsciously think of the names as belonging to a dead age or to mythology, and the shock of finding them in common use compels us to make an adjustment so swift that our first instinct is to laugh. My reaction to my astonishment at finding Persephone on one side of me and Cornelia on the other, with Demetrius Sophocles at the far end of the table, was one of delight. Greece was coming true beyond all my expectations. If I had walked into 'The Inn of the Beautiful Helen, Wife of Menelaus' and had been greeted by Orestes and Agamemnon, I should have rent the roof with my cheers.

Sitting between Cornelia and Persephone at that table in Athens, and eating the most delicious lamb I have ever tasted, I felt myself at home. Mr. and Mrs. Lucas are bitter about the food they were given in Greece. 'Supper was loathsome beyond description,' they say of the meal they ate at Aegina, 'with its greasy mutton, macaroni cold as worms, and salad that tasted of oily resin. In case of doubt, an omelette is at least the safest thing in this least culinary of countries. For Greek meat is calculated to turn anyone a frenzied vegetarian; and all Greek cooks come from Laodicea, to judge by the intolerable tepidity of all their dishes. "Hot" is not a word in their vocabulary. We fled from our host to sustain life on some little cakes in a dark side-street.' This account is supported by the testimony of friends of mine who have travelled in Greece almost as extensively as Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, but the food I ate in Athens was superb, and the lamb that night in the tavern was the best I have ever eaten. I was to eat lamb almost as good in Istanbul a week later.

The owner of the tavern was absent when we began our meal, visiting his farm, we were told, but he turned up before the evening was ended and declared himself delighted to see us. The room in which we dined was small and cool and bare and white, and separated from the main dining-room by a court-yard in which, before it was cooked, we could inspect the food we were to eat. The bareness of the room was almost exhilarating, and as I glanced about me, I recalled the thrill with which, in my youth, I suddenly realised one winter morning how beautiful are bare branches of trees. Until that moment I had thought of the winter time as bleak and ugly and bare, and I shuddered with imaginary cold when I saw trees, stripped naked and looking miserably black. I longed for the spring to come and bring brown and green and red buds that would unfold into exquisitely tender green leaves. I was puzzled by the fact that brown, resinous-looking buds, such as I saw on beech-trees, turned into gentle green leaves, as delicate as crape, but I did not allow the puzzle to bother me much: it was enough that the tight pointed buds, looking like little thin bobbins, would become green, and the whole tree be covered with applauding leaves. My vision of the beauty of bare branches was beheld on a morning when I was

recovering from an illness which had been expected to kill me. I had walked out for the first time for many weeks, and as I sauntered without energy along a road outside Belfast, I suddenly saw the beauty of dark and leafless branches against a bright wintry sky. There were thick branches and tiny twigs that had lately been no bigger than stems. The leaves in spring and the summer had hidden them, but now they were plainly visible, and they were lovely, like lace or ferns or the fronds of seaweed or the spars of red coral that my Uncle Jack had brought home from the Indian Ocean! . . . That memory had not returned to my mind for a long time, but now as I sat in that tavern talking to *Cornelia* and *Persephone*, it returned, and I could see myself again, standing still and gaping at the leafless trees, aware for the first time of their beauty, and horrified, too, by the thought that I might have died without perceiving it. The poignancy of early death had struck me then, and it struck me again in that tavern, and I thought how cruel it was to die young, before one had realised all the loveliness of this world, or had one's fill of life! . . .

Persephone chose strange sea-food, a sort of octopus, and I, who like to adventure among dishes, accepted a piece of the queer fish and ate it well enough, but not with any desire to make a meal of it. I preferred lamb, and while I ate it, *Cornelia* told me tales of the Russian Ballet, of which she had briefly been a member. Her father had been a strict man, disapproving of dancers, and so, because she loved her father, she had ceased to dance, though to dance was all she desired. Now her father was dead, and the Ballet was scattered everywhere! . . . She was sad and small and shy, not like *Persephone* who was robust and assured and full of laughter; and she had to be coaxed to talk at all. But, perceiving that I was interested in her dancing days, she told me more. 'You love dancing?' 'Yes, I love it. I am alive when I dance! . . .' Our talk was interrupted by the intrusion of young men who carried musical instruments and had come to sing to us. They were gay, and they made us feel gay, too. One of these musicians, a big man with a fine voice, reminded me of Balieff, who led the *Chauve Souris*: he had the same abundant sort of face, heavily folded and full of good temper, and looked as if he might crack a bad joke very well. Without any self-consciousness, the musicians

played and sang for a long time, stopping only while a poet from Corfu, who resembled Mr. Ezra Pound, came in to recite his verses. I suspect that they were bad, but as they were delivered in Greek and I did not understand a word of them, it was immaterial whether they were or not. He spoke them well, and we were willing to think them magnificent. Mr. Philadelpheus leant across the table and said to me, referring to the musicians and the poet, 'This is the oldest thing in Greece!'

We came out of the little bare room into the cool courtyard and here Mr. Morton and Mr. Stewart decided to let the Greeks see them dance a Scotch reel. It excited Cornelia, who thought that she too could dance it, and so, despite her high heels and her tight skirt, Stewart and she danced under the Athenian moon while we stood beating time. Greeks issued from the main dining-room. Among them was the Prefect of Athens. They made a circle round the dancers, and applauded loudly. Was that, I wondered, the first time that a Scotch reel had been danced under the Acropolis? When the dancers linked arms and swirled round, Cornelia proved to be too light, and was swung off her feet, but she danced to the end. Her eyes were very bright, and she protested that she was not tired. She would dance for us as she had danced in the Russian Ballet, and once more that shy girl was transported. 'Yes, I love it. I am alive when I dance.'

It was late when we drove from the tavern to see the Acropolis by moonlight. Calm and beautiful, the great rock rose up into the moonlit sky, darkly massive, imperturbable, bearing its wounds with pride. I turned towards the sea. Athens was still lit with many lamps that stretched out to the Piraeus. Under this serene and starry sky, mankind became majestic in mind and spirit. A people grew and spread and dwindled and died on this small earth, leaving behind them indestructible memorials of a beauty that once was, that still is, that yet again may be. Somewhere in the velvety darkness of the Athenian night, was the rocky prison in which Socrates took the hemlock. Close by was the hill on which the tentmaker from Tarsus told the Epicureans and the Stoics that they were not without grace since they worshipped, albeit ignorantly, the unknown god, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, not in such temples as those that adorned the Acropolis:

'Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.'

And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them . . . and came to Corinth, to which, on the following day, but more comfortably than Paul, I, too, went; but not without wondering at the temerity of the man who, with the splendour of Greece around him, dared to deny its worth. There was the Acropolis surmounted by the Parthenon, a temple made with hands, and there, in front of the Parthenon, was the great statue of Athena, thirty feet high, holding a winged Victory in her extended right hand. Paul was not daunted by her magnificence. He knew how to be abased and how to abound, and this was an occasion on which he was determined to abound. Was he, who had withstood the Apostle Peter to his face, to quail in the presence of a figure of Athena, a graven image such as the Lord his God had forbidden him and his nation to make? These Greeks might sneer at the Jews for their artistic poverty, but that poverty was voluntarily sought, endured at the command of the God of Israel, and it would take a greater man than Phidias to make Paul feel abased by his sculpture. So the rabbi, though he was not indifferent to the culture of Athens, affirmed his faith in the resurrection of the dead, and declared that the offspring of God ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. I can imagine his hand pointing to the statue of Athena as he spoke.

Did any thought cross his mind that she would be tumbled down and broken and carried in fragments away, so that there would be left no sign of her existence other than a mark in the ground where she had stood? Or that he, derided on Mars' Hill, would one day be celebrated in the name of a thousand churches?

XXVIII

We drove along the Sacred Way, first to Daphni, and then to Eleusis. At Daphni, immediately I had descended from the car, I heard myself greeted with excitement: 'Sir, sir! The Acropolis! Sir!' Looking up I saw one of the young men who had carried me up the rock and deposited me on the floor of the Parthenon, and we shook hands as if we were old friends, and laughed a lot because I had no Greek and he had little English. He tried, but not very hard, to sell me some tourists' rubbish, and I, because we were friends, refused to buy it, which made him laugh, and made me laugh, and made all who saw us laugh, too. We parted as amicably as if I had bought his entire stock, wishing each other well and hoping that some day we might meet again. I did not try to detain him from the sale of his junk, for he had his education to earn, and a man does wrong to detain a youth from that important traffic.

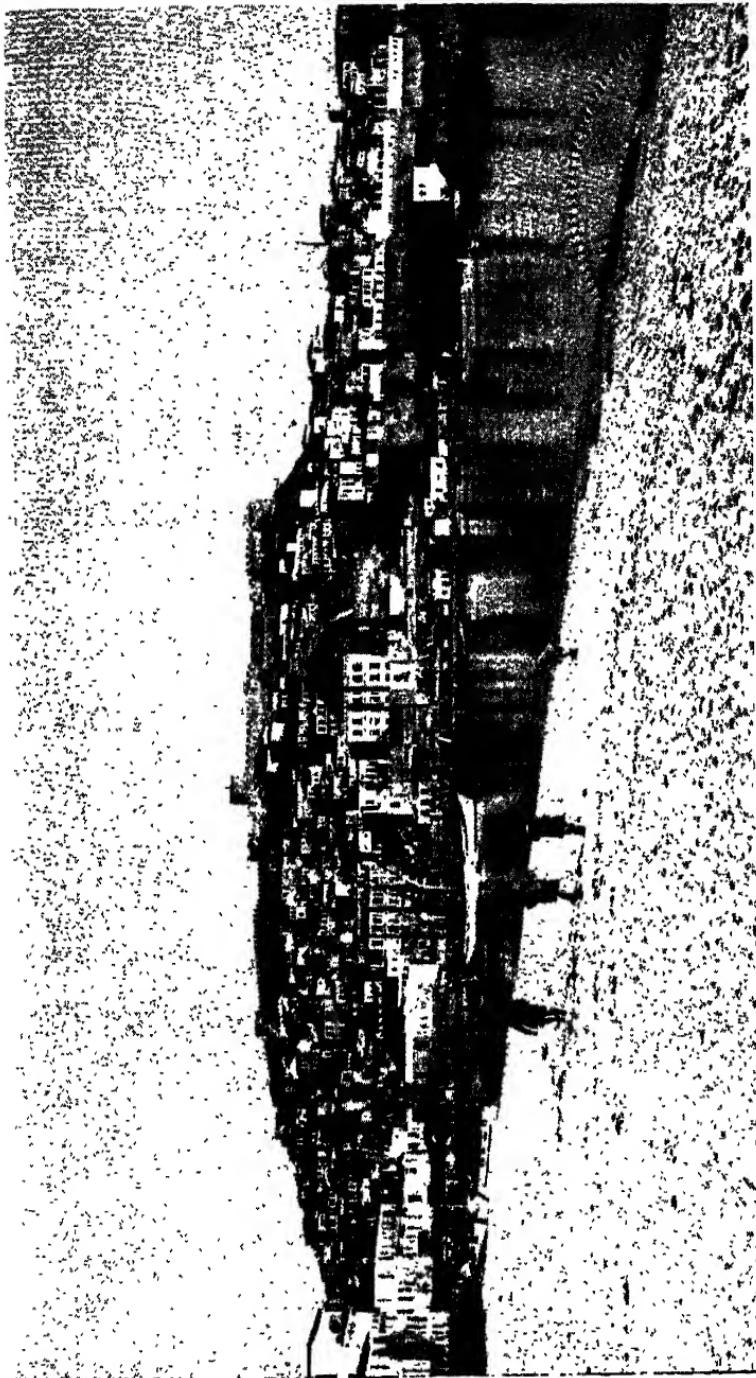
There is a convent or monastery in Daphni, but I was less interested in it than I was in the Bay of Eleusis and the island of Salamis which I now saw for the first time. I looked at it so long that I almost forgot to look at the Convent, and if anyone were to inquire of me what was in the Convent, I should not be able to tell him. I lose interest in ruins very easily, and cannot excite myself over tumbled stones because of their history. They must have some beauty of their own if I am to be moved by them. Had the Parthenon been no more attractive than the Convent at Daphni, I doubt if I should have felt any emotion over it, in spite of its history. Greek churches seem extraordinarily unattractive to me, and I cannot feel any sense of religion in them. In my bones and blood I am a Protestant, but I have often been profoundly stirred by a service in a Roman Catholic Church, and am moved by the Roman Catholic religion more than I care to confess. The Jesuits compel my admiration because of their ability and devotion,

and I cannot read of Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier without feeling affection for them. It is no credit to a man that he loves Francis of Assisi. It would be discreditable to him not to love that happy saint. The Mass moves me, but more, I suspect, because of its dramatic quality than because of its religious significance; and I am especially susceptible to the beauty of Benediction. I cannot recall an occasion in my life when I did not feel a sense of religion in a Roman Catholic Church, even when I felt myself repelled by relics and evidences of absurd superstition. The faith seems to me to triumph over the tawdry addition to it.

But I have never felt any sensation of religion in a Greek Church, no other emotion, indeed, than one of aversion from the whole vulgar business. That, I realise, is an appalling assertion to make about a religion, and one which must offend a devout Greek if he should read it; but I am recording my feelings as I felt them, and not as it would have been tactful for me to have felt them. I went to many Greek churches, but never for a moment felt that awe which I feel in the meanest looking church, Anglican, Non-conformist or Roman Catholic, at home, which I felt in every mosque I entered in Istanbul and Damascus. If ever a religion were on its last legs, the Greek orthodox religion seems so to me; an incredibly commonplace, ugly religion, in which the devout learn only to grovel, and piety is identified with the routine performance of ritual acts. Byzantine art, at its best, does not appeal to me, nor do mosaics excite more than a small interest in my mind. It is evident, therefore, that I am the sort of person who is temperamentally incapable of experiencing any religious emotion in a Greek church. I would prefer to see the Temple of Zeus restored to active religious life than to perpetuate the Greek orthodox religion. The Homeric heaven was inhabited by queer gods, and the faith of which they were the summit was a singular contraption; but it was a manlier religion than that which now rules in Greece if, indeed, it rules at all. Were I a Greek I should demand the return of the ancient gods rather than defer to the faith which has issued in the monks of Mount Athos.

We did not stay long at Daphni, but drove on to Eleusis, where I was more interested in the fact that Aeschylus was born

there than I was in the Eleusinian mysteries, and I was willing enough to drive away from the insalubrious village when the sights had been seen. Eleusis, says Dr. McClymont in *Greece*, is 'an unattractive and unhealthy village', with scarcely any interest in it for the visitor; and Baedeker describes it as 'now a poor and fever-haunted village'. It is, however, one of the oldest places in Greece, and succeeded in keeping itself to itself after Theseus had made some sort of confederation of the contending states. But its inhabitants to-day seem to have given up all hope of any resurrection for them. I quickly forgot them when I found myself speeding along the lovely road that curls round the Aegean Sea to Corinth. A fishing-boat with a deep red sail was afloat on the blue Aegean, and Salamis, in a haze, lay across the water. I was driving through religion and history. On that misty island, described by Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, who landed on it, as an 'ugly little island – bare and barren – a heap of rocky rounded hills, covered only with scrub, like a series of unshaved jowls', but looking infinitely lovely from the road to Corinth, the Greeks thrashed the Persians, sinking two hundred of their ships and sending them hurrying home, minus a corps, to lick their wounds. Three times in eleven years the Persians attacked the Athenians, and three times the Athenians thrashed them: once, in 490 B.C., when the Greeks under Miltiades suddenly dashed on the dis-organised Persians, under King Darius, at Marathon and knocked them stiff; once, ten years later, in 480 B.C., when the Persians, now under King Xerxes, the flogger of the Hellespont, were lured into the Bay of Eleusis by the courageous indiscretion of Themistocles and beaten off that blue sea; and lastly, in the spring of 479 B.C., when Xerxes having bolted back to Persia, left his general, Mardonius, to retrieve his fortunes. On this occasion the Spartans, who had dallied in Lacedæmonia in 490 B.C., because of one of their puerile superstitions, and arrived at Marathon after the fight was over, aided the Athenians, who only just defeated the Persians and might themselves have been defeated had not Mardonius been slain on the field. The fight off Salamis in 480 B.C. was witnessed by Aeschylus, who was serving on an Athenian ship, and he describes it in *The Persians* in a speech spoken by one of Xerxes' men. John Addington Symonds has rendered the



KAVALA, GREECE

From a photograph by Mary Morton

Greek into vigorous English which will be found in his essay on Athens in *Sketches in Italy and Greece*.¹ The passage which follows succeeds one in which there is an account of the Persians patrolling the straits by which the Bay of Eleusis is entered:

'Night passed; yet never did the host of Hellenes
 At any point attempt their stolen sally;
 Until at length, when day with her white steeds
 Forth shining held the whole world under sway,
 First from the Hellenes with a loud clear cry
 Song-like, a shout made music, and therewith
 The echo of the rocky isle rang back
 Shrill triumph; but the vast barbarian host
 Shorn of their hope trembled; for not for flight
 The Hellenes hymned their solemn pæan then –
 Nay, rather as for battle with stout heart.
 Then too the trumpet speaking fired our foes,
 And with a sudden rush of oars in time
 They smote the deep sea at that clarion cry;
 And in a moment you might see them all.
 The right wing in due order well arrayed
 First took the lead; then came the serried squadron
 Swelling against us, and from many voices
 One cry arose: "Ho! Sons of Hellas, up!
 Now free your fatherland, now free your sons,
 Your wives, the fanes of your ancestral gods,
 Your fathers' tombs! Now fight you for your all!"
 Yea, and from our side brake an answering hum
 Of Persian voices. Then, no more delay,
 Ship after ship of biting brass
 Struck stoutly. . . .
 At first the torrent of the Persian navy
 Bore up: but when the multitude of ships
 Were straitly jammed, and none could help another,
 Huddling with brazen-mouthed beaks they clashed
 And brake their serried banks of oars together;
 Nor were the Hellenes slow or slack to muster
 And pound in a circle. Then ship's hulls
 Fleated keel upwards, and the sea was covered
 With shipwreck multitudinous and with slaughter.
 The shores and jutting reefs were full of corpses.
 In indiscriminate rout, with straining oar,
 The whole barbarian navy turned and fled.'

That blue water had seen some very bloody battles fought

¹ I am indebted for this information to Mr. Cecil Fairfield Lavell's book, *A Biography of the Greek People*.

and this road, along which I drove in comfort, had witnessed many singular sights and been trodden by strange people. Paul had come pounding along it shortly after he had delivered his brief, but tremendous, sermon to the Epicureans and the Stoics on Mars' Hill, but I doubt if he stopped to remark on the beauty of the Aegean Sea or the loveliness of Salamis across the blue water.

We crossed the great Canal which connects the Gulf of Corinth with the Saronic Gulf, a deep and narrow channel, too narrow to serve much purpose now, for only small ships can sail through it. The first attempt to cut a canal was made by Nero, who set a vast crowd of soldiers and captives to work on it, among them being about six thousand Jews who had been sent to Corinth by Vespasian. Digging began about the end of A.D. 67, three years before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and the Emperor himself, after he had chanted hymns in honour of the maritime gods, turned up the first earth with a golden pick axe which was obsequiously handed to him by the governor of Greece. The task was not completed, however, for when about four furlongs had been excavated, Nero received bad news from Rome and his armies in the west.¹

The canal we crossed, which is four miles long, about seventy-five feet wide, and twenty-six feet deep, was begun by a French company in 1881, and finished by a Greek company in 1893. It cost £2,400,000.

The new town of Corinth, a bungalowoid place, is about three and a half miles from ancient Corinth which lies at the foot of the precipitous mountain, nineteen hundred feet high, which is called Acro-Corinthus. The new Corinth has all the look of a town that was wrecked by one earthquake and expects to be wrecked by another. It has no appearance of permanence, but there is permanence in the look of ancient Corinth, in spite of its ruined state; and the great remains have a more substantial appearance than the brick bungalows of the modern town.

The founder of Corinth is supposed to have been the mean-minded Sisyphus who lives in our knowledge because of his condemnation to roll eternally an enormous stone almost to

¹ Sir James Frazer gives an account of these operations in *Pausanias*.

the top of a hill, only to see it roll eternally down again. Sisyphus was the grandfather of a beautiful and generous and noble youth, Bellerophon, whose winged horse, Pegasus, struck water from the fountain of Peirene on Acro-Corinthus.

But that is not the only legend of the fountain's origin. Peirene is said to have been 'a nymph who wept herself to a fountain in sorrow for her son slain by Artemis'. Corinth was the home of many people renowned in Greek history. One of its kings, Creon, who is said to have been descended from Sisyphus, brings about the tragedy in Euripides' play, *Medea*, by giving his daughter, Glauke, to Jason. Jason, who was robbed in his childhood of his father's kingdom, Iôlcos, in Thessaly, by his uncle, Pelias, returned to his home in his manhood, and demanded his heritage. Pelias, a cowardly creature, agreed to give it to him, according to Pindar, if he would perform two feats: fetch the soul of Phrixus home from the mysterious land of Colchis and find the Golden Fleece of the Ram which Phrixus had sacrificed in that country. Jason undertook the task and, after many dangerous adventures, reached Colchis, whose King, Aiêtës, was on the point of slaughtering him and his companions, the Argonauts, when Medea, his daughter, a tiger-cat of a woman, who possessed powers of enchantment, fell in love with Jason and, slaying the sleepless serpent which guarded the Fleece, secured it and the soul of Phrixus, and gave them to her lover. She stabbed her brother Absyrtus, who had intended to kill Jason, and then Jason and she fled from Colchis together, reaching Iôlcos after a long lapse of time and a series of misadventures. They could not marry, for the law forbade a lawful union between a Greek and a barbarian, but Medea gladly lived in concubinage with Jason, regarding herself as his wife and bearing him two sons. Observing how deeply Pelias hated his nephew, she decided to destroy him and, in the pretence of giving him a potion which would enable him to renew his youth, she prepared a poison which was administered to him by his daughters. He died in great agony.

This murder compelled Jason to fly his country and, taking Medea and her sons with him, he went to Corinth, whose king, Creon, was old and the father of one child, a woman. Robbed of all hope of ruling Iôlcos, because of Medea's crime, Jason thought that he might be welcome as a son-in-law to Creon,

and soon after his arrival in Corinth, his impending marriage to Glauke was announced. It is at this point that Euripides' play begins. It was not, and is not, a popular piece. There is too much horror in it. The Greeks esteemed it so little that it was given the third prize when it was produced in the Theatre of Dionysus in Athens in 431 B.C., the first prize going to Euphronon and the second to Sophocles.

'But now the world is angry,' says the Nurse at the beginning of the tragedy:

‘and true love

Sick as with poison. Jason doth forsake
My mistress and his own two sons, to make
His couch in a king’s chamber. He must wed:
Wed with this Creon’s child, who now is head
And chief of Corinth. . . .¹

The Voice of Medea, mourning for her misfortunes, is heard issuing from her house in Corinth, in front of which the play begins. She calls down curses on Jason and her children and 'this house and all'.

‘O Zeus, O Earth, O Light,
Will the Fire not stab my brain?
What profiteth living? Oh,
Shall I not lift the slow
Yoke, and let Life go,
As a beast out in the night,
To lie, and be rid of pain.’

She comes out of her house and addresses the Chorus of Corinthian women in a terrific tirade against men, beginning:

‘Women of Corinth, I am come to show
My face, lest ye despise me.’

Men, she complains bitterly, treat women as toys and talk of child-bearing as if it were a trifle. 'And then forsooth, 'tis they that face the call of war, while we sit sheltered, hid from all.' But:

‘Sooner would I stand
Three times to face their battles, shield in hand,
Than bear one child.’

That cry must have sounded strange in Athenian ears. It sounded a note Euripides was to strike more than once, and it

¹ I am, of course, using Professor Gilbert Murray's translation.

exposed him to the wrath and ridicule of Aristophanes; he was a dangerous fellow who put ideas into women's heads.

At the end of her speech Creon enters the scene, and informs her that she must leave Corinth:

‘Thou woman sullen-eyed and hot with hate
Against thy lord, Medea, I here command
That thou and thy two children from this land
Go forth to banishment.’

He frankly confesses his fear of her:

‘Thou comest here
A wise-woman confessed, and full of lore
In unknown ways of evil. Thou art sore
In heart, being parted from thy lover's arms.
And more, thou hast made menace . . . so the
alarms
But now have reached mine ear . . . on bride and
groom,
And him who gave the bride, to work thy doom
Of vengeance. Which, ere yet it be too late,
I sweep aside. I choose to earn thine hate
Of set will now, not palter with the mood
O Mercy, and hereafter weep in blood.’

Medea begs for delay. ‘For one day only leave me in thy land at peace, to find some counsel.’ Creon grants her appeal:

‘So linger on,
If thou needs must, till the next risen sun;
No further. . . . In one day there scarce can be
Those perils wrought whose dread haunteth me.’

In that one day Medea makes her plot:

‘Fool, Oh, triple fool! It lay
So plain for him to kill my whole essay
By swift exile: and, lo, he sets me free
This one long day: wherein my haters three
Shall lie here dead, the father and the bride
And husband – mine, not hers.’

She will pretend to acquiesce in Jason's plan to marry Glauke and to be willing to go quietly away, leaving her children behind her. To show how submissive she can be she will send gifts to the bride, ‘Fine robings and a carcanet of gold’,

but these gifts, thought by Jason to be tenders of friendship, are to be fatal to Glauke and her father:

‘Which raiment let her once take, and fold
About her, a foul death that girl shall die
And all who touch her in her agony.’

Jason himself, robbed of his bride, will suffer extremely in the death of his sons, whom Medea will murder! . . . The crimes are committed. Glauke, after some hesitation, caused chiefly by the sight of Medea’s sons, accepts the gifts and is enchanted by them. The horrified messenger who brings an account of Glauke’s death to Medea, describes the young girl’s artless pleasure in her robe and crown with pathetic power:

‘she drew
The flowered garments forth, and sate her down
To her arraying: bound the golden crown
Through her long curls, and in a mirror fair
Arranged their separate clusters, smiling there
At the dead self that faced her. Then aside
She pushed her seat, and paced these chambers
wide
Alone, her white foot poising delicately –
So passing joyful in those gifts was she! –
And many a time would pause, straight-limbed, and
wheel
Her head to watch the long fold to her heel
Sweeping.’

But Glauke’s girlish delight in her crown and dress was brief. In a few moments ‘came something strange’, and she staggered fainting to her seat in an epileptic fit:

‘through her lips was seen
A white foam crawling, and her eyeballs back
Twisted, and all her face dead pale for lack
Of life.’

The poor creature was crowned with a carcanet of gold ‘That gripped her brow . . . in a dire and wondrous river of devouring fire:

‘And those fine robes, the gift thy children gave –
God’s mercy! – everywhere did lap and lave
The delicate flesh; till up she sprang, and fled,
A fiery pillar, shaking locks and head

This way and that, seeking to cast the crown
 Somewhere away. But like a thing nailed down
 The burning gold held fast the anadem,
 And through her locks, the more she scattered
 them,
 Came fire the fiercer, till to earth she fell
 A thing – save to her sire – scarce nameable
 And strove no more.'

Creon, called to his child's room, comes moaning piteously, the only person who dares to touch her charred remains, and is himself immediately consumed:

'Again, again,
 Up on his knee he writhed; but that dead breast
 Clung still to his: till, wild, like one possessed,
 He dragged himself half free; and, lo, the live
 Flesh parted; and he laid him down to strive
 No more with death, but perish; for the deep
 Had risen above his soul. And there they sleep,
 At last, the old proud father and the bride,
 Even as his tears had craved it, side by side.'

Euripides departs from the legend in his account of Glauke's end, for the legend makes her cast herself into a fountain in a fruitless effort to quench the flames.

The tragedy now proceeds to the final horror, the murder by Medea of her sons, and the reduction of Jason to complete despair. The last words of the play are spoken by the Chorus:

'Great treasure halls hath Zeus in heaven,
 From whence to man strange dooms be given,
 Past hope or fear.
 And the end men looked for cometh not,
 And a path is there where no man thought:
 So hath it fallen here.'

Our fate is capriciously determined by the gods, and it is useless for us to repine. We must bear it as best we can. Something of the same thought, a little more courageously put, perhaps, is expressed by Edgar in *The Tragedy of King Lear*, when he says to Gloucester:

'Men must endure
 Their going hence, even as their coming hither:
 Ripeness is all.'

The *Medea* fails to be fully tragic because it is too terrible and the characters are without nobility. They are neither noble nor ignoble; they are almost null. Medea herself is stripped of human resemblance, a fantastic fiend, rather than a woman, and ready to commit any crime to indulge her desire. Jason cuts a poor figure in the play: a numskull of a man who casually casts aside a woman who devotedly loves him, the mother of his sons and his benefactress, for a girl for whom he professes no feeling of affection. Creon has no authority in the play, but is a weak, rambling, forcible-feeble old fellow, pathetic at the best, but of no account. Glauke does not appear: she is only described; and that, it seems to me, is a fault in Euripides' play, though it gives the Messenger a magnificent opportunity for a fine piece of descriptive declamation.

All that lamentable love affair culminated here in Corinth, and it was in Corinth, too, that the brilliant soldier, Alexander III of Macedon, better known as Alexander the Great, encountered the surly cynic Diogenes, who, when the young king paid him the honour of a visit, and inquired if there was anything he wanted, replied with a grunt, 'Stand out of my sun!' Alexander, with great courtesy and exceptional self-restraint exclaimed to his attendants that if he were not Alexander he would wish to be Diogenes, though why he should have wished to be anyone so unmannerly, is hard to understand. The honours of the occasion were not with the philosopher, but with the soldier. Diogenes, however, despite his surly retort to the king, was a useful figure, and taught the world, in eccentric fashion, not to let itself become obsessed with the mania, as Walt Whitman called it, for owning things. He can scarcely have encouraged any member of the crowds that thronged to the Corinthian Festivals to listen to his orations to hope for happiness, but at least he taught his auditors not to depend too much on property. His value to mankind was limited; for we cannot spend our time in tubs, nor is it desirable that we should shed decoration and live as barely as possible; for if it were, why trouble to civilise ourselves, why not quickly relapse into savage simplicity? The object of Diogenes, apparently, was to live on the least that would maintain life, but his object was not worth the trouble of its pursuit, and the philosophy behind it amounted to little, even to him, for he depended on the charity of passers-by,

while he lived in his tub outside the temple of Cybele, or on his earnings as tutor to the sons of Xeniades, a Corinthian, to whom he was sold as a slave after he had been captured by pirates from Crete. 'Being asked his trade, he replied that he knew no trade but that of governing men, and that he wished to be sold to a man who needed a master.' So Xeniades bought him and took him to Corinth where he remained for the rest of his life, becoming a famous lecturer at the Isthmian games.

It was at one of these festivals, so it is said, that he met Alexander the Great, and there is a legend that he died in Corinth on the same day that Alexander, after an orgy of drinking that robbed the world of a great man, died at Babylon. That soldier, who cut the Gordian knot, and sighed, according to report, because there were no more worlds to conquer, not knowing of the existence of China, Siberia, Australia and the Americas, was a great soldier and a greater man than Napoleon: a scholar as well as a soldier, a pupil of Aristotle and worthy of his tutor, a devout lover of the *Iliad*, a brave and generous-minded man who was a successful commander at sixteen and might have established a comity of nations had he survived his foolish orgy. He was thirty-three when he died. 'Despite the advice of Aristotle,' said Mr. H. A. L. Fisher in *A History of Europe*, Vol. 1, 'he refused to regard the Orientals as an inferior race, nor did he proscribe their religious beliefs. A wise toleration, social, religious, political, informed the government of his conquered provinces. . . . In idea his empire was coterminous with the world and founded on the doctrine of the equality of man, a universal society designed to conform to a common standard and subject to a sovereign who, as the supreme benefactor of mankind, was rightly accorded divine honours, in fine, a Holy Greek Empire foreshadowing the Holy Roman Empire of later times.' His reputation, not unnaturally, is the subject of dispute, for soldiers, more than other men, except, perhaps, admirals, seem to suffer from denigration, as our own times have shown, but we may believe that Alexander was a soldier of supreme genius and that his early death was a disaster.

XXIX

Corinth was a prosperous city, a place of great luxury, when

Paul came to preach in it, and a complete contrast to Athens from which he had recently arrived. It was to Athens, in some respects, as Glasgow is to Edinburgh, a brisk and busy modern city, which had been re-founded by Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., and was proud of its prosperity. Athens had behind it five centuries of civilisation, and a great tradition in art and philosophy; but Corinth was commercial, purse-proud, inhabited by active business men to whom culture was unimportant and acquisitiveness was all. A city full of uncouth, energetic men, swift in the pursuit of wealth, but slow, if moving at all, in the pursuit of culture, is destined to become a sink of iniquity. Merely to be acquisitive and to pile up possessions requires no great intellectual quality. Fortunes have been made by illiterates, and any brigand can do as much as some very rich men have done. A vigorous man, if he be sufficiently unscrupulous, can amass ample means without many aids from education or the possession of those amenities of mind which are thought to be prominent among the objects of life. If to become wealthy is the chief end of man, Mr. Al. Capone, the well-known countryman of Signor Mussolini, may well wonder why people pick on him! . . .

Corinth, in comparison with Athens, was barbaric, a city full of upstarts whose social habits, being unrefined by any culture, tended to become vicious. Its inhabitants were so mixed in blood that they could scarcely be called Greek. The scum of the Mediterranean floated into Corinth and settled there. The place was meat and drink to an apostle. It happens to be one of the few places visited by Paul where a date can be fixed with some approximation to accuracy, as Dr. Anderson Scott points out, for his sojourn there, according to Acts xviii. 12, 'coincided with Gallio's term of office, and we know now from a fragmentary inscription at Delphi that that term covered part of the years A.D. 50 and 51'.

Among the inhabitants of Corinth, when Paul arrived in the city, were a number of Jews who had been deported from Rome by the Emperor Claudius. These Jews included Aquila, a tent-maker, who was born in the province of Pontus, and his wife, Priscilla, with both of whom Paul became friendly. He lived with them, working at their craft, which was also his; for it was the custom of the Jews in those times to have every boy taught

a trade, and a rule of the rabbis that each of them should have a handicraft by means of which he could, if necessary, maintain himself. Tentmaking was an obvious craft for Paul to follow, for Cilicia, the country in which he was born, was celebrated for weaving the hair-cloth called *cilicium*, out of which tents were made. He bade the Thessalonians to 'remember: brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God'. He lived in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, and 'reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks'. But the quarrels that broke out wherever the apostle went were not long in brewing in Corinth after he had 'testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ'. Those with whom he quarrelled seem to have included Aquila and Priscilla, though the quarrel was subsequently composed, for he 'departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue'.

The place where the synagogue is supposed to have stood was pointed out to us by a young Greek guide who remarked that it was 'a eunuch situation', an assertion which was received in silence.

The apostle appears to have converted Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, who 'believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptised'. The quarrel which led Paul away from the house of Aquila and Priscilla and their friends was sufficiently fierce to make the apostle shake his raiment and declare that their blood must be upon their own heads. 'I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.' But he did not. He remained in Corinth, after he had received a message from God in a dream, for eighteen months. At the end of that time, 'the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul', and brought him to the judgment seat of Gallio, the deputy of Achaia, saying, 'This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.' But Gallio was even less inclined to mix himself up in Jews' quarrels than Pontius Pilate had been, 'and he drove them from the judgment seat'. 'Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue,' from which, presumably, Paul had seceded at the time of the quarrel, 'and

beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of these things.' Was this Sosthenes the enemy to whom Paul so magnanimously refers in II Corinthians ii. 5-7? Paul remained in Corinth 'a good while' after the dismissal by Gallio of the charge made against him, and then went to Syria, taking with him Aquila and Priscilla, with whom he had become friendly again, and stayed in Ephesus a short time, reasoning, as usual, in the synagogue with the Jews, before he went up to Jerusalem, leaving Aquila and Priscilla behind.

What, we may wonder, was the vow the apostle took before he reached Ephesus, a vow which caused him to have his head shorn in Cenchrea?

He was succeeded in Corinth by the Jew, Apollos, 'born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, who was privately instructed by Aquila and Priscilla so that he might know the way of God more perfectly'.

There is no luxury in Corinth now, but only a hard living. All that glory is tumbled to broken pillars and roofless temples; and the successors of Sisyphus and Creon and Diogenes and the Jews earn a few drachmas by digging up its remains for the American School of Archaeologists. I turned away from the ruins and, seating myself on a fallen stone, gazed across the Gulf to a range of mountains in which all the colours of the rainbow seemed to have been refined.

'all things have their end:
Churches and Citties (which have diseases like to men)
Must have like death that we have.'

Antonio says in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*; but the mountains shining in many colours under the bright sun above the blue sea seemed less liable to diseases than anything in that place. They remain much as they must have been when Paul was provoking quarrels under their shadow because he would reason with the Jews and testify that Jesus was Christ. While I sat on the tumbled stone, some gipsies went by, and one of them, a young girl with bare feet, danced on the grass for a few moments, oblivious of my gaze. I dare say one of her ancestresses danced before Paul, infuriating him with the grace of her movements and sending him in hot haste to the synagogue to forget the sight of lovely young legs.

That night we sailed for Salonica, which was known to Paul as Thessalonica, and was named after the illegitimate daughter of Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great. She was murdered by one of her own sons.

xxx

But Salonica was no sight for sore eyes. This town, familiar to thousands of British soldiers as their own town, has suffered heavily from nature and man. It is a wrecked town. War, followed by fire, has left it in a state of ruin almost worse than that of the devastated area in France in 1918. I never saw a shelled road in France more terribly destroyed than some of the streets in Salonica through which an audacious driver took his Ford, first over mounds of mud, and then over brutal-looking rocks. I bounced from boulder to boulder, and felt sore from one end of Salonica to the other. If to be tossed up and down and flung from side to side of a car is good for the liver, as amateur physicians assert, then my liver has been permanently improved. But I could wish to be cured by a less violent system of therapeutics. Salonica, when I saw it, looked like a drawn-out slum. I wondered how our soldiers survived it, and imagined them swearing more terribly there than they swore in Flanders either in My Uncle Toby's time or since.

The fire which destroyed it in 1917 probably did it a great service, as great, I hope, as the service done to London by the Great Fire of 1666, which burnt out the plague so effectively that there has been no such epidemic of disease in London since that date. The plumber, of course, is a more efficient opponent of disease than the incendiary, and the Salonicans will have to do more to remove malarial germs from their midst than depend on periodical conflagrations; but at least the fire of 1917 assisted them to make a start. Judging, however, by the slowness with which they are putting their town to sorts, the germs of disease have had ample opportunity to recover from their burns, and may now be so robust that only another conflagration can do anything with them. The place is poverty-stricken, nor is its poverty lessened by the presence in large numbers of Anatolian refugees whose houses swarm with ricketty-looking children. Child-bearing, indeed, appears to be the chief

industry of Salonica! . . . Several of my friends remarked that these Anatolian infants looked healthy, but I could not share their complacency about them, though I will not deny their cheerfulness or that of their parents: a good-natured and, I should say, generous-minded people. I leant against the wall of a cottage on a hill outside Salonica while a woman with bright eyes looked out of her window at our party. She was handsome in a rough way, an ample, prolific-looking woman with large, humorous eyes and a mouth that was ready to laugh on the least provocation. She thought us the greatest fun. We had come several thousand miles to see a slum! . . . Ha, ha, ha! . . . But I wished that she had had no cause for her derision, good tempered though it was, and that her country could do better than leave her in a fever-infested hovel to breed like a rabbit.

Such moralisings are easy, the good Greek, anxious for his country's repute, may pardonably complain, but the moraliser might remember how poor Greece is, how gigantic is the task she has to perform, how hard it is to make 'the good life' in a disorganised world when there is little or no money, and the soil on which the good life has to be made is hard and unfruitful, and the people out of whose bodies and labour it must be created are apathetic or distracted by their failure to make their ambition square with their ability. That is a complaint to which I am quick to listen. We, with our resources, have not been so successful in overcoming the difficulties created for us by the wreck of Europe that we have any right to go about the earth sneering at the failures of less fortunate people than ourselves; but I sometimes think that our governors appreciate less than they might the willingness of the governed to make an effort in their own behalf. Might not the miseries of Greece be greatly abated if the rulers were to consult the ruled a little more frankly about the solution of their material problems? Here is the town of Salonica, sadly wrecked. Let us suppose that the politicians, instead of contending against each other for authority, were to make a compact for a period of years that manœuvrings for position shall be suspended until the town has been put right, and that these politicians went to the people and said, 'Will you help us to make Salonica the finest city in Greece, even if our effort brings no profit to us, but only profit

to posterity?" need anyone fear the response? Greece needs a revivalist. Is he sitting in the Palace at Athens awaiting his chance?

I went into a Byzantine church, which had been badly burnt in 1917. It contained some fine mosaics, but I was less interested in these than I was in the workmen who were rebuilding the church. I sat on a fallen pillar and watched them very slowly rubbing a large slab of marble. At intervals they glanced up from their rubbing to gaze shyly at the stranger in their midst, and when I smiled at them, they smiled back. That was the only means of communication we had. But when I looked at their faces I felt assured that these men had only to be called to more active attempts to make their country more liveable in for their children than it has been for them, to respond with fervour. I begged Mr. Morton to leave his damnable photographing of mosaics so that he might come and photograph these workmen, one of whom had a remarkable face, the sort of face that Valesquez would have loved to paint. They were overcome with delight when he took pictures of them, and once again I wondered why people feel pleased at being photographed, especially when, as must often happen to people like these workmen, the results are never seen. Is it because of a kindly wish to indulge the desire of the photographer or a wish to indulge our own vanity? There was a miller in Cornwall who told me with pride that his face had been photographed by people from all over the world. I felt that he regarded himself as their benefactor, as, indeed, I think he was, for he had a magnificent head, and merely to look at a fine face does us all good; but he had very seldom seen any of the photographs, and did not appear to mind that he had not. It was he who begged me to solve a problem in aesthetic which had long troubled him. Artists were profuse in those parts. 'And they tell me,' he said, 'that people buy their pictures!' 'They do,' said I. 'Well,' the miller inquired, 'how do the people who buy these pictures know they're like the places they're supposed to be?' My failure to solve this problem lowered me for ever in his opinion.

To come to Salonica from Athens or Corinth is to sustain a severe shock; from that beauty, even in ruin, to this squalor. I went up a hill and entered a Byzantine church, one of several

such churches I saw, and came out again oppressed by its tawdriness. The priest in one of these churches, a dirty old man in a filthy robe or cassock, seemed to have lost any respect for his faith he may have had; for he took no pains to keep himself in a fit condition to meet his God. There seems to me something appalling in the state of mind of a man who, were he about to receive a politician or an official, would make some effort to fit himself for the occasion, but will walk into the sanctuary of the Most High without even the elementary courtesy of washing his hands.

The second priest in this church was obviously a sexual pervert; the only pansy priest I have ever seen, a dreadful, affected fellow, with finicking, fussy movements. He swayed up to the bell, which hung from a wooden frame, rather like the frame of a child's swing, outside the church, and rang it for a few minutes. Then he swayed away, like a tart displaying what she believes to be ladylike manners, and presently I heard him mumbling prayers. I did not see a single Salonican enter the church while that pansy prayed. He was a monk from Mount Athos: a place reputed to be plentiful in pansies.

I listened to part of a service in another and larger, but no less ugly, church in the centre of Salonica, where all the priests were washed; almost offensively washed. Five women continually crossed themselves, while a priest muttered to himself or handed them an *eikon* to kiss. In a third church a man came and licked *eikons*, while an old woman prostrated herself on the ground and licked anything that was available! . . . I cannot conceive of a God to whom this superstitious abasement is pleasing. If I were the Almighty I should wish to be worshipped by upright and self-respecting men and women, not by crawling, whining, snivelling *lickers*! I came away from the Salonican churches with an impression that the religion professed in them is a matter of routine, rather than of spiritual emotion, and that the priests, many of whom are reputed to be extraordinarily ignorant men, are content, as the Pharisees were, to repeat prayers in public. They do not so much pray as say a piece. If there were inflaming piety in Salonica, the burnt and broken churches would be rebuilt by the faithful for love of their religion.

It was at Salonica, about the year 1880, that Mustapha Kemal, son of a petty customs officer, one Ali Riza Bey, was born in a mouldering sort of a shop to which our attention was drawn. He is now known as Kemal Ataturk, the dictator of Turkey, and is regarded with reverential awe by Young Turks. They gave him the title of Ataturk, which means 'Father of the Turks', but that title, magniloquent though it is, seems a drop from the meaning of 'Kemal', which is 'Perfection'. He is also known as The Ghazi, 'the victor', and as Grey Wolf.

We sailed from Salonica before seven in the evening, and I went with gladness. I have no wish to see that place again. There is a world to see. Who wants to go to places where men lie down before life and let it roll over them?

xxxI

In the morning we dropped anchor off the island of Thasos. I had not intended to go ashore. My experience in Salonica had dwindled my desire to see the backyards of Greece. Being bumped about bad roads is not my notion of fun, especially when the places seen are not worth the bumping. But a note from Mr. Morton, who had gone ashore early, brought me hurriedly after him. The people of Thasos, who had not seen cruisers before or for a long time, had prepared a reception for us, and there was dancing in the village square! . . .

I stepped out of the launch and found myself in the middle of as charming a situation as I have ever seen. Thasos is a lovely island with a history of almost intensive warfare in which its inhabitants took gallant part. Archilochus, I read, described it as 'an ass's backbone crowned with wild wood', and the description, I read on, 'still suits the mountainous island with its forests of fir'. The description is not one that would have occurred to me, nor shall I let myself be persuaded to see any sense in it because an ancient drew it. Why an ass's backbone? Why not an elephant's or a whale's? Comparisons are odorous, a remark that I used to think was made by Mrs. Malaprop, and did not for a long time learn was made by Dogberry, but need they be as odorous as that? We are all addicted to this habit of comparing a thing to something else, and imagine ourselves to be poets because we say a cloud looks

like a balloon or a heap of snow or a ship flying before the wind or a troop of cavalrymen. How much more poetic to call a cloud a cloud and leave it at that. But no, we must search for similes until, like Archilochus, we become ridiculous and say that a mountain which is covered with firs looks like 'an ass's backbone crowned with wild wood'.

My own tendency to find resemblance in one thing to another was curbed by the habit of a lady who, when I said, 'That cloud looks like a balloon!' would instantly deny that it did, saying, 'Oh, no, I think it looks like soapsuds!' in a tone which indicated that there could be no doubt about the fidelity of her comparison. Indeed, she spoke in a way that made me feel that she would be greatly surprised and disappointed if the cloud were not in fact, as well as in appearance, a mass of soapsuds. I did not marry her, though I was well enough disposed to her, for I thought life would be intolerable with a woman who wrecked my analogies and destroyed my similes almost as a matter of course. If I said to her, 'That man over there reminds me of So-and-so!' she would reply, 'Oh, no, he doesn't. I can see no resemblance whatever!' or, 'He reminds *me* of Such-and-such!' Judges do not grant divorces to those who have to endure such contradictions, yet how much more reasonably might they grant them for that cause than for any other.

It was from Thasos that Theagenes, the athlete, came. 'As a boy of nine,' say Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, 'he picked up a bronze image of one of the Gods from the market-place and marched off with it and was nearly killed for such sacrilege. He grew up as an athlete so pre-eminent that he won fourteen hundred victories at different festivals. But when he died, an enemy used to go every night and whip his bronze statue. The statue, anticipating the Commander in the story of Don Juan, retaliated by falling on its tormentor and killing him. The sons of the victims prosecuted the statue and the Thasians sentenced it to be thrown into the sea,' which was very silly of them, and justly deserved the punishment it received. 'A famine followed. Delphi told the Thasians to recall their exiles. They obeyed; yet the famine went on. Again they resorted to Delphi, and the Priestess said, "But you have forgotten your great Theagenes." Soon after some fishermen accidentally brought up this statue in their nets. It was put

back in its old place and Theagenes honoured as a god, with power to heal diseases.'

I do not know whether the statue is still to be seen, nor do I greatly care. My mind that lovely morning was not on old, ancient things, nor was it on Theagenes, but on the pleasant people who live in Thasos now. As I came ashore I saw Thasian girls dancing in a style so simple that when they suddenly drew some of our cruisers into their ranks, they, too, after a little awkwardness, were able to dance. The girls were dressed in gala dress, for the entire town had taken a holiday so that we might be suitably greeted, and extraordinary trouble had been taken to make our visit agreeable to us. We were presented with posies of violets, hyacinths, rather like those we call grape hyacinths, and narcissi. The Mayor read an address to Sir Henry Lunn, who did not understand a word of it, and was replied to in English of which the Thasians understood as little. But that did not matter. We smiled amiably at each other, and were full of goodwill and laughter. As we prepared to leave the island, the Thasians gathered on the quay and waved their hands to us. A cruiser thereupon began to sing that difficult lyric, 'For they are jolly good fellows', which is usually pitched too high and makes those who sing it feel like fools. I know of no more afflicting experience than to have to sit down in a large company of persons who are standing up and asserting in a key too high for them that one is a jolly good fellow.

The Thasians listened to the lyric in silence, and well they might. Our singer, however, was not daunted by the manner in which we sang that the Thasians were jolly good fellows, and he started up 'Auld Lang Syne'. It was even worse, and back-fired badly, leaving most of us in the air; but it seemed to please the Thasians, for they waved us away — or were they perhaps glad to see the last of people who sang so terribly? — and smiled until we could no longer see their expressions. As we went on board the *Laetitia*, we discovered that Sir Henry Lunn had imagined himself all morning to have been at Kavala, to which we were now sailing, and on this fact being reported to Lady Lunn, that darling old lady remarked, 'Well, where were we?' Mrs. Morton bestowed two jars of Thasian honey on me. I carried them safely home to Victoria Station, but between that remarkable erection and my flat in London, some villainy

happened, for when I descended from my taxi-cab, the lid had parted from a jar, and I came out flowing with honey, while the taxi-driver, surveying his mat with anxiety, wondered what sort of a game this was! Thasos is a delightful memory. Cursed be the tourist who ruins its islanders by turning them into tip-hunters and relic-mongers.

xxxii

We came next to Kavala, a small seaport on the frontier of Thrace and Macedonia, another place to which I have no wish to return: a smelly town, full of foul food and Byzantine art, where Mr. and Mrs. Morton and I fortunately fell in with a Greek who had learnt English in Pittsburg. He had lived there for four years, and was a very intelligent man, but seemed not to have shaved since his return from America. Business, he said, was bad, and he gratefully abandoned it for the day to devote himself to us. There was an excursion from Kavala to Philippi where Brutus and Cassius met and were defeated by Mark Antony and Octavius; but I did not join it, for I was told that the road was awful, and that there was nothing to see when Philippi was reached. My dislike of Brutus, an inferior Lord Curzon, is strong enough to make me glad to see any spot on which he suffered defeat. He was a perfect specimen of the stupid gentleman who presumes upon his birth, and supposes himself to be superior, not only socially, but intellectually, to the less wellborn. In every conference in which Brutus and Cassius participated, Brutus over-ruled Cassius and was wrong. It was he who decided that their troops should march to Philippi to fight the forces of Mark Antony and Octavius, against the advice of Cassius that they should remain where they were and rest, letting the enemy wear themselves out by marching to meet *them*.

BRUTUS. Well, to our work alive. What do you think
Of marching to Philippi presently?

CASSIUS. I do not think it good.

BRUTUS. Your reason?

CASSIUS. This it is.

'Tis better that the enemy seek us:
So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers,
Doing himself offence; whilst we lying still
Are full of rest, defence and nimbleness.

BRUTUS. Good reasons must of force give place to better.
 The people 'twixt Philippi and this ground
 Do stand but in a forced affection,
 For they have grudged us contribution:
 The enemy, marching along by them,
 By them shall make a fuller number up,
 Come on refresh'd, new-added and encouraged;
 From which advantage we shall cut him off
 If at Philippi we do face him there,
 These people at our back.

CASSIUS. Hear me, good brother.

But Brutus will not listen to him, and pompously interrupts him with:

Under your pardon. You must note beside
 That we have tried the utmost of our friends,
 Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe:
 The enemy increaseth every day;
 We, at the height, are ready to decline.
 There is a tide in the affairs of men
 Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;
 Omitted, all the voyage of their life
 Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
 On such a full sea are we now afloat,
 And we must take the current when it serves,
 Or lose our ventures.

CASSIUS. Then, with your will, go on;
 We'll along ourselves and meet them at Philippi.

Brutus is the public-school boy at his worst: self-confident, dull, disdainful of those who have not been lucky enough to have parents able to pay for superior education, and assured that his approval is a certificate of good character and general worth; a being so far removed from the public-school boy at his best that it is hard to believe that they went to the same school. I would, I repeat, gladly visit any spot on which this dull and pompous gentleman suffered defeat, but I found the temptation to wander about Kavala with Mr. and Mrs. Morton more than I could resist; so I did not go to Philippi, which they had previously visited, and was told afterwards by Professor Duncan that I was wise in that decision.

Philippi is immensely interesting to students of Paul's life, but they can read about his singular adventures there in the New Testament and need not incommode themselves by visiting the place. It is celebrated, first, for the fact that it was

named after the father of Alexander the Great, and second, and more importantly, because it was here that the apostle sustained his only persecution by Gentiles. They were, it is true, Gentiles of an indifferent sort, but such as they were, they were unique in Paul's career.

The story of this persecution and, indeed, of the whole visit to Philippi makes odd reading. It was a brief visit, but it was full of extraordinary experiences, including one of an earthquake which shook the prison in which Paul and Silas were confined, almost to pieces. There had been a dispute between Barnabas and Paul about the young man, John Mark, who makes such a mysterious figure in the Gospels and the Epistles, and the upshot of it was that Barnabas took John Mark to Cyprus in something like high dudgeon, while Paul took Silas into Syria and Cilicia, to Derbe and Lystra, where they met Timotheus, the son of a Greek and a Jewess, and induced him to join them. The three men then travelled through Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia and Troas, in which last-named place Paul had a vision of a Macedonian, crying, 'Come over into Macedonia and help us!' He determined to do so, and went to Samothracia, 'and the next day to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony' or city whose inhabitants were entitled to call themselves Roman citizens. It is thought that the Macedonian of the vision was Luke, who, Sir William Ramsay thinks, on disputed grounds, was born at Philippi, and that the vision was not so much a vision as an actual appearance to a man in such a poor state of health – Paul suffered from malaria as well as from a form of epilepsy – that he might easily suppose a real person to be a ghost. If the reader will refer to the sixteenth chapter of *The Acts of the Apostles*, he will observe that whereas the author of the work describes the journey up to the end of verse nine as it might be described by one who had not participated in it, but had been told about it, he writes thereafter as a person engaged in it. 'And after he had seen the vision, immediately *we* endeavoured to go into Macedonia! . . .'

There was no synagogue in Philippi, but the small group of Jews who lived there used to walk out of the city on the sabbath to pray by the riverside. Paul and Silas and Timotheus and Luke, if he were one of them, went to this meeting-place on the

first sabbath after their arrival in Philippi; 'and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither'. One of them was called Lydia, a native of Thyatira, a city in Asia Minor, nearer to Pergamos than to Ephesus, who sold purple. Paul baptised her and her household and she begged the apostle and his companions to live in her house. It was while they were walking from Lydia's house to the place of prayer by the riverside that they encountered the Gentiles who had Paul imprisoned. These people, a band, perhaps, of gipsies or strolling players, possessed a demented slave girl who told fortunes and made money for them. The girl, immediately she caught sight of the apostles, cried out that they were the servants of the most high God, and she seems to have followed them for 'many days' until at last Paul commanded the demon to leave her. Restored to her senses, the girl was no longer able to tell fortunes, and this catastrophe threw her masters into a rage so great that they chased the apostles and succeeded in catching Paul, whose capture was easy, for he was not far short of sixty, and Silas. Timotheus and Luke escaped. The captives were taken before the magistrates and accused, not of restoring a girl to sanity and thus disabling her from earning her living, but of teaching customs which it was unlawful for the Philippians, who were Roman citizens, to observe or receive. The charge caused an uproar, and the magistrates, who seem not to have inquired very closely into the matter, immediately had the two apostles severely flogged and flung into prison. The gaoler was ordered to keep them in the closest security, which order he promptly, almost excessively executed, for he not only confined his prisoners in the inner prison, but put them both in the stocks.

At midnight, while Paul and Silas were disturbing their fellow-prisoners by praying and singing hymns, an earthquake occurred, 'so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bands were loosed'. The effect of this sudden enlargement of gaol-birds on the gaoler was distracting: he tried to commit suicide, although it must have been apparent even to the magistrates of Philippi that he could not be blamed for the earthquake or the consequent escape of any of the prisoners. When he heard Paul bidding him to be of good cheer, and assuring

him that all his prisoners were safe and at hand, his relief was so great that he promptly became a Christian and was baptised before dawn.

Fortune was favourable to Paul thereafter. In the morning the magistrates sent their sergeants to the gaoler to order him to release the apostles, but when the gaoler informed Paul that he was free, Paul threw him into some confusion and put the magistrates in a considerable fix by refusing to leave the prison until the magistrates themselves had come and set him and Silas free. They had caused Roman citizens to be beaten in public without taking the trouble to find out whether they were guilty of any offence, and then had cast them into prison. Now, feeling perturbed at what they had done, they were trying to shuffle out of their responsibilities by releasing the apostles 'privily' and hustling them out of the town. But 'nay, verily,' said Paul, 'let them come themselves and fetch us out'. So flustered were the Philippian magistrates at what they had done to Roman citizens that they hurried to the prison and begged the apostles to go away as quickly and quietly as possible. But Paul took his time about his departure from Philippi. He had taught the magistrates a lesson, one which he might have taught them earlier, although, perhaps, the hullabaloo in the court was too great for him to be heard, or he may have been in no condition to reason with anybody, and he would leave Philippi when it was convenient to him to do so. He took Silas to Lydia's house, 'and when they had seen the brethren they comforted them, and departed' to Thessalonica, taking Timotheus with them, but not, apparently, Luke, who perhaps had run so hard from the accusing Gentiles that he could not be found for some time.

It was not necessary, however, to take a tiresome drive to Philippi to find records of those adventures, and I remained, therefore, in Kavala, though Kavala is no place for a holiday. Here, as in Salonica and on the Piraeus, we found Anatolian refugees, and here again I wondered why it is that no one in Greece has yet arisen to do for these unfortunates what volunteers have done in England for the unemployed, tried to find some occupation for them that will take their minds off their misery and remove their belief that they are not wanted. Even if such a person could not hope to obtain money for the re-

fugees, he could surely find enough money to feed them well in return for their labour. He might employ the men to re-house their families in return for their keep, thus laying the foundations of a healthy life, from which a renaissance of Greece might spring. To let a whole population fester is a sin against the Holy Ghost. Gazing on these refugees, who seemed to me people of fine quality, I felt any romantic notions I had about the gorgeous East running rapidly out of my head. It is a dirty, poverty-stricken, *stuck* place, I began to believe at Kavala. That belief was almost an unshakable conviction by the end of the cruise. Our guide informed us that there were many communists in Kavala, nor was I surprised to hear him say so. Wherever men and women are left to fester, revolutionary feeling is certain, sooner or later and rightly, to display itself. A governing class which does not govern, but abandons the people while it enjoys itself or only takes care of its own immediate interests, ought to be liquidated, as the Bolsheviks prettily put it. Had the French and Irish gentlemen not neglected their duty in the eighteenth century, the history of France and Ireland to-day would be very different. Every officer in the British Army is taught that his duty is to seek the comfort and welfare of his men before he seeks his own. The instruction is good. It should be general for all governing men. An officer who ate while his soldiers starved would deserve to be summarily and ignominiously shot.

We were taken through a crowd of idle and interested Kavallans to the modest villa, standing on a slope on the edge of the town, in which Mehemet Ali, the Albanian who delivered Egypt from the Sultan, was born. It is bare of furniture or any signs of his occupation, and resembles the worst type of jerry-built bungalow, so far as its construction is concerned, but it is a shrine to the Egyptians, who maintain a uniformed sentinel outside its entrance, and must seem a mansion to the Kavallans. Mehemet's father was a farmer, and Mehemet himself, though he was illiterate, became a minor inland revenue officer and trader in tobacco in Kavala, but took to soldiering with immense *éclat*, and gave Mahmud II a succession of shocks so severe that the venerable Sultan could not think of him without violently losing his temper.

In 1840 Mehemet Ali brought Europe to the verge of war; the

conflict of 1914-18 was almost anticipated. The whole of the Near East was kept in a turmoil by this singular man for a long period by the expedient which Near Eastern Sultans and pashas have long adroitly used, of playing off one Power against another, and of posing as deliverers when all they meant was to be exploiters. There is a degree of subjection in which the subjected are willing to change their oppressors merely for the sake of variety. Mehemet Ali might be no better than Mahmud II, might even be worse, but he was different, and even the galley slave likes a change of fetters.

He was regarded with profound interest by Europeans who saw in him the first of the progressive Orientals. Jeremy Bentham, the Utilitarian philosopher, wrote to him, giving him good advice which Mehemet Ali studiously neglected to take. 'In fact,' says Professor Alison Phillips, 'the pasha was an illiterate barbarian, of the same type as his countryman, Ali of Iannina, courageous, cruel, astute, full of wiles, avaricious and boundlessly ambitious. He never learned to read or write, though late in life he mastered colloquial Arabic; yet those Europeans who were brought into contact with him praised alike his dignity and the charm of his address, his ready wit, and the astonishing perspicacity which enabled him to read the motives of governments and to deal effectively with each situation as it arose.' He went out of his mind and died on August 2, 1849, aged eighty, in a quietness of rule that must have seemed incredible to him, supposing him to have had lucid moments, when he remembered how violent and disturbing the greater part of his life had been.

Our guide invited us to survey the rooms which had formed part of Mehemet's harem: they stand on the side of the house away from the road, overlooking the sea, and thus prevented licentious men from seeing the moons of Mehemet's delight, prevented, too, the moons themselves from looking lasciviously on other men. Here the Deliverer's women spent their time, squatting on low platforms that ran round the rooms in which they lived and slept, and fattening themselves on sweetmeats while they waited to be fertilised; for such was the existence of favoured Oriental women. It seems a poor way to pass one's life.

A piece of sculpture, covered with a protective sheet, stands

in a small square outside the house, ready to be unveiled some day by somebody! . . . At intervals the sheet is blown off by the wind, but is replaced by another sheet, while everybody decently pretends not to have seen the statue. Eventually, no doubt, some eminent person will find time to dash into Kavala to remove the sheet for good, and if he is a sensible man and has any regard to his nostrils, he will dash out again even more quickly than he dashed in.

XXXIII

On our way from Athens to Thasos we passed, but did not land on, Skyros, the island on which Rupert Brooke, the first friend I lost in the War, is buried. If he had survived he would now be fifty years of age, but I cannot conceive of him as a man of fifty, with greying hair and wrinkled brows. I shall always remember him as he was when I saw him for the first time at Cambridge: a tall, broad-shouldered undergraduate, fair and ruddy like David, and with long golden hair brushed back from his handsome head. I hesitate to use the word *beautiful* about a man in these times when the word *beauty* is debased by nervous youths who haunt the Russian Ballet, but there is no other adjective which is more applicable to Brooke than *beautiful*. He was a manly youth, the only man I have ever seen who looked like the traditional figure of a Greek god, and if he had to die in the War it was fitting that he should die in the Aegean and be buried in a Greek island. He was shy and often silent, as silent as Tennyson, but he laughed a lot and was easy with his friends. Cities oppressed him, and he fled from London to Grantchester with pleasure; for he could not work in town, but only in the country. I suppose women would have undone him if he had lived. He was almost irresistible to them, although he kept himself in hand where they were concerned, and did not squander his strength on affairs.

His radiance was astonishing, and made him illuminate any place he entered. I remember a night in the Hampstead Tube, when, returning from a newspaper office after a first performance at a theatre, I found myself in a car full of grey men and greyer women in that stage of fatigue when appearances are no longer regarded. The air was stale, and people,

stupefied by it, lay about the cars in heaps, a loose and sprawling mass of unattractive and exhausted humanity, brutally lit up by hard electric lights. A man sat opposite to me, fast asleep, and his mouth hung open, revealing black and yellow teeth. Oil had soaked into his clothes until they were almost stiff with it. He looked infinitely tired. Beside him sat a woman with lustreless eyes who yawned and yawned and yawned. There was no grace in her nor in him nor in any of us. We were worn and, apparently, done. If we were images of God, somebody had trodden on us and defaced the figures! . . .

At Leicester Square the gates of the car slid open and Rupert Brooke, looking like the son of the morning, stepped into our dingy compartment — and instantly, it seemed to me, our graceless air was gone. The dead came to life.

I never saw Brooke again. Soon after that encounter he went to America, from whence came cards to tell us how he fared, and then on to the Fiji Islands and to New Zealand, and back again to America, and so home a few weeks before the War began. He was commissioned in the Royal Naval Division, and sailed for Antwerp, where he took part in its abortive defence. In January 1915, he returned to London, suffering from influenza, and at the end of February went off to the Dardanelles. On April 17, his party landed at Skyros. Six days later, on Friday, April 23, 1915, 'the day of Shakespeare and of St. George,' he died of acute blood-poisoning and was buried. 'At 4.46 he died,' his friend William Denis Browne, a young musician, who, six weeks after Rupert's death, was himself killed in an attack on the Turkish trenches before Krithia, wrote to Rupert's mother:

'At 4.46 he died, with the sun shining all round his cabin, and the cool sea-breeze blowing through the door and the shaded windows. No one could have wished a quieter or a calmer end than in that lovely bay, shielded by the mountains and fragrant with sage and thyme. We buried him the same evening in an olive-grove where he had sat with us on Tuesday — one of the loveliest places on earth, with grey-green olives round him, one weeping above his head; the ground covered with flowering sage, bluish-grey, and smelling more delicious than any flower I know. The path up to it from the sea is narrow and difficult and very stony; it runs by the bed of a dried-up torrent. We had to post men with lamps every twenty yards to guide the bearers. He was carried up from the boat by his A Company

petty officers, led by his platoon-sergeant Saunders; and it was with enormous difficulty that they got the coffin up the narrow way. The journey of a mile took two hours. It was not till 11 that I saw them coming (I had gone up to choose the place, and with Freyburg and Charles Lister I turned the sods of his grave; we had some of his platoon to dig). First came one of his men carrying a great white wooden cross with his name painted on it in black; then the firing-party, commanded by Patrick; and then the coffin, followed by our officers, and General Paris and one or two others of the Brigade. Think of it all under a clouded moon, with the three mountains [of Paphko, Komaro, and Khokilas] around and behind us, and those divine scents everywhere. We lined his grave with all the flowers we could find, and Quilter set a wreath of olive on the coffin. The funeral service was very simply said by the Chaplain, and after the Last Post the little lamplit procession went once again down the narrow path to the sea. Freyburg, Oc, I, Charles and Cleg [Kelly] stayed behind and covered the grave with great pieces of white marble which were lying everywhere about. Of the cross at the head you know; it was the large one that headed the procession. On the back of it our Greek interpreter wrote in pencil:

Ἐνθάδε κεῖται
δ δοῦλος τοῦ Θεοῦ
ἀνθυπολοχαγὸς τοῦ
Ἀγγλικοῦ ναυτικοῦ
ἀποθανὼν ὑπὲρ τῆς
ἀπελευθερώσεως τῆς
Κων πόνιας ἀπὸ
τῶν Τούρκων.

At his feet was a small wooden cross sent by his platoon. We could not see the grave again, as we sailed from Skyros next morning at 6.¹

Within six weeks of Brooke's burial Denis Browne and Colonel Quilter were dead, 'and all but one of the others had been wounded. Kelly, Lister, and Shaw-Stewart have since been killed.' All the Brookes are dead. Rupert's elder brother, Dick, died in 1907; his younger brother, Alfred, was killed near Vermelles in June 1915, serving as a lieutenant in the Post Office Rifles.

¹ This quotation is taken from the fine Memoir of Brooke, contributed to the Collected Poems by Mr. Edward Marsh, who gives the following translation of the Greek inscription on Brooke's grave: 'Here lies the servant of God, Sub-Lieutenant in the English Navy, who died for the deliverance of Constantinople from the Turks.'

XXXIV

As we sailed from Kavala to the Dardanelles, I had Brooke in my mind. We went to the War in his spirit, and returned from it in the spirit of Siegfried Sassoon. Looking at the long, unrelenting rock, Gallipoli, which darts out of Turkey like an ant-eater's tongue, I found old memories rushing up from hidden folds of my mind to abolish time and space. The graves of our dead are plainly seen from the Narrows by those who sail to Constantinople, or Istanbul, and those of us who are middle-aged or old fell silent when we saw them. 'O my brave brown companions,' Sassoon wrote:

'O my brave brown companions, when your souls
Flock silently away, and the eyeless dead
Shame the wild beasts of battle on the ridge,
Death will stand grieving in that field of war
Since your unvanquished hardihood is spent,
And through some mooned Valhalla there will pass
Battalions and battalions, scarred from hell;
The unreturning army that was youth;
The legions who have suffered and are dust.'

My comrades in the Dublin Fusiliers had fought in the 29th Division on that rock, and I, too, though I was not at Gallipoli, wore its flash on my back in France, where, in candlelit billets out 'at rest' or in the trenches, I listened to tales of that campaign that ended in our evacuation of the peninsula, but might so easily, if men were not fallible, and limited in knowledge, have ended in victory and have shortened the War. Leaning against the side of the *Laetitia*, and gazing at the graves enclosed by a white wall, I lamented the waste of our gallantry on that rock. Brooke, who thanked God who had matched him with his hour, lies buried in Skyros a few miles of water away, and Constantinople, for whose liberation from the Turk, according to the epitaph on his grave, he died, is still the Turk's. For several thousand years, those waters have been reddened with young blood, and the end of their reddening is not yet. . . .

I did not land on Gallipoli, but landed instead at Chanak, and drove to Troy where, again, I remembered Brooke, recalling a bitter poem he wrote about that lovely slut, Helen,

for whom a multitude of gallant men suffered there and died.

The Turks were suspicious of us, and raised innumerable difficulties about our landing. They were eager to encourage travellers to visit their territory, they said, but they could not have been more troublesome if they had wished to keep us away. We were forbidden to use our own launches, and had to hire big, clumsy boats manned by Turks. Soldiers, carelessly handling loaded rifles, followed us everywhere. This was not allowed. That was not allowed. The other was not allowed. To carry cameras was forbidden. Any pretext to charge double for a service was eagerly seized. Young Turk, in short, was less agreeable than Old Turk was reported to have been, although myself I have long felt sceptical about the charming manners of the Turk. It was a legend in France that the Turkish soldier was a gentleman, but the legend began to dispel when soldiers who had fought him told their tales, and when at last those who had been prisoners of the Turks were released, the legend was blown away. There is a deal of cruelty in all of us, and the Turk has his share of it.

The road along which we drove to Troy was, at the outset, excellent: a legacy to the Turks from the Germans; but it soon ceased to be well laid, and became a mud track that must, in wet weather, be a bog. The morning was lovely, and Mr. and Mrs. Morton and I were lucky enough to secure a car, and had not to huddle into the primitive motor chars-a-banc into which the other members of the party were crowded. These were the best vehicles that were available in Asia Minor, where, it is easy to understand, the latest models are not greatly in demand. But even with our exceedingly skilful driver, we sometimes feared overturn. One char-a-banc was ditched, and another lost a wheel, but we all got to Troy and back, too, without serious mishap. It was here that I heard for the first time the immemorial cry of the East, '*baksheesh*', a cry that I was to hear in greater intensity as I went further away from Europe, which becomes, I am told, for I did not go there, almost maddening in Egypt. It was here, too, that I first saw a file of camels, heavily loaded and led by an ass, go padding by. Here, as I was to find in Palestine and Syria, mud tracks are left beside well-metalled roads so that the oxen and the camels

may walk on them. The beasts cannot grip the metalled roads.

The road to Troy rises rapidly as it leaves Chanak, and the country through which it runs is very beautiful, mainly moorland, with olive groves in places. Soon after we left the town I saw a sight that was to become common during the succeeding weeks, a man ploughing in the most primitive, Old Testament manner; with a roughly turned branch, shod with an iron spike and drawn by oxen. In this manner Abraham probably ploughed. The country is sparsely populated and seemed poverty-stricken. The standard of living is, I imagine, extremely low.

The soldiers here, as elsewhere in this part of the world, are much better clad, and have a healthier look, than the civilians. The dictators have carefully learnt the lesson that a governing class cannot keep itself in authority unless it has a contented army to support it. But why do they restrict their attempts at contentment to the soldiers? Would they not be more secure if they were to reduce the causes of discontent in the civil population? The question may seem naïve, yet it is plain to the most casual observer that the dictators fail lamentably to do the job which they are supposed, because of their release from opposition and official delays, to be most competent to perform: namely, the prompt removal of wrongs and hindrances to recovery from economic illness. The Ducé can sweep aside any vested interest which hinders the raising of the general standard of living in Italy, yet he has signally failed to do so, failed utterly to make the lot of the Italian peasant equal, apart altogether from surpassing, that of the working-man in Great Britain, whether that working-man be an agricultural or an industrial labourer, although Great Britain is governed on principles which the Ducé considers to be inept and almost criminal: the principles of democracy. When every allowance, however liberal, is made for the defects of our social and political and economic system, there remains the indubitable fact that the standard of living of the working-people in Great Britain is easily the highest in Europe, and is, in many respects, the highest in the world. It is not only higher than the general standard of living throughout the world, but is considerably higher than it was in Great Britain before the War. To say

that is not to say that we may rest from our labours or ignore the difficulties which attend reformers in other countries who have still to contend with circumstances that no longer prevail in Great Britain; but it is to say that the system of government by which the governors periodically submit themselves to the judgment and the chastisement of the people appears to be more satisfactory as a means of making and maintaining a decent standard of living than is the system of subjecting the entire nation to the arbitrary decrees of one exuberant and powerful personality.

I would not exchange the lot of a labourer in an English village for that of a labourer in an Italian vineyard. If I had to choose between living as a farm servant in England and living as a farmer in Asia Minor, I would unhesitatingly choose to live as a farm servant in England; nor would my choice be dictated by national prejudices. If anything was evident to me during the journey to Jerusalem it was this, that the material conditions of the working-people in Great Britain are enormously superior to those of the working-people in any Southern European and Near Eastern country I visited. The lowest paid unskilled labourer in England, Scotland and Wales is far better off in every respect than the farmers of Spain and Greece and Asia Minor. The fact is insufficiently recognised by many of our politicians.

XXXV

Troy is, I do not doubt, of absorbing interest to archaeologists, but my interest in decrepit stones is slight. I went there, not to gaze on ancient and dispersed masonry, but to indulge my rancour against that early film star, Helen, and to gloat again on the discomfiture of experts and scholars which was caused by the discovery of Troy's remains. It is said by some historians that Helen was the ostensible excuse for the Trojan War, and that the real excuse was a struggle for markets. The people who commanded the entrance to the Dardanelles commanded the economic situation in the Near East. I hope these historians are right, for I cannot bear to think that a multitude of brave men spent ten years and lost a host of lives in trying to capture or retain that hussy. Her face, even if it were

universally acknowledged to be beautiful, could not have been worth the waste of so much valour. 'The end crowns all,' says Hector in *Troilus and Cressida*:

'And that old common arbitrator, Time,
Will one day end it.'

And what, we may inquire, is the end of his arbitrament? Helen makes a poor appearance in Shakespeare's play, a mincing miss, scarcely worth the trouble a man might take to kiss her; nor is her appearance in Euripides any better. She is a snivelling creature in *The Trojan Women*, throwing the blame on everybody but herself. Shakespeare makes Troilus agree with Euripidean Hecuba that Helen was unsurpassably beautiful. 'Why, she is a pearl,' says Troilus, who seems to have read Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*:

'why, she is a pearl'

Whose price hath launch'd above a thousand ships,
And turn'd crown'd kings to merchants.
If you'll avouch 'twas wisdom Paris went,
As you must needs, for you all cried "Go, go,"
If you'll confess he brought home noble prize,
As you must needs for you all clapp'd your hands,
And cried "Inestimable!" why do you now
The issue of your proper wisdoms rate,
And do a deed that Fortune never did,
Beggar the estimation which you prized
Richer than sea and land? O, theft most base,
That we have stol'n what we do fear to keep!'

But Troilus can speak braver words than those when he comes to tell his own heart's desire, Cressida, that she must depart from him. 'Is it possible?' she cries when she hears that she must leave Troy and Troilus. 'And suddenly,' he replies. She must go that very moment.

'And suddenly; where injury of chance
Puts back leave-taking, justles roughly by
All time of pause, rudely beguiles our lips
Of all rejoindure, forcibly prevents
Our lock'd embrasures, strangles our dear vows
Even in the birth of our own labouring breath:
We two, that with so many thousand sighs
Did buy each other, must poorly sell ourselves
With the rude brevity and discharge of one.
Injurious time now with a robber's haste

Crams his rich thievery up, he knows not how:
 As many farewells as be stars in heaven,
 With distinct breath and consign'd kisses to them,
 He fumbles up into a loose adieu,
 And scants us with a single famish'd kiss,
 Distasted with the salt of broken tears.'

A lover ravished from his girl, is likely to speak warmer words than a soldier testifying to the looks of his sister-in-law, and a comparison of these speeches does not warrant us in thinking that Helen's looks were less amazing than they are commonly supposed to have been; especially when Hecuba, in Euripides' play, warns Menelaus against the seductive charms of his recovered wife:

'I bless thee, Menelaus, I bless thee,
 If thou wilt slay her! Only fear to see
 Her visage, lest she snare thee and thou fall!
 She snareth strong men's eyes; she snareth tall
 Cities; and fire from out her eateth up
 Houses. Such magic hath she, as a cup
 Of Death! . . . Do I not know her? Yea, and thou,
 And these that lie around, do they not know?'

But Menelaus has to struggle with his emotion on beholding her again, and to be spurred by Hecuba to maintain some show of indifference. The woman, it seems, was beautiful, as Faustus and the Three Scholars fearfully said when Mephistophilis summoned her wraith from hell to Faustus' study. 'Too simple is my wit to tell her praise,' says the Second Scholar, 'Whom all the world admires for majesty.' 'A queen, Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare,' the Third declares, while the First, assured that Helen is 'the pride of Nature's work, And only paragon of excellence,' invites his comrades to depart with him, since neither heaven nor hell can be expected to show anyone lovelier. Dr. Faustus himself is undone by her beauty. 'Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,' he cries:

'And burnt the topless towers of Illium? . . .
 Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss. . . .
 [She kisses him.]
 Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flies! . . .
 Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
 Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
 And all is dross that is not Helena.'

I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
 Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sack'd;
 And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
 And wear thy colours on my plumed crest:
 Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
 And then return to Helen for a kiss.
 O, thou art fairer than the evening's air
 Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
 Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
 When he appear'd to hapless Semele;
 More lovely than the monarch of the sky
 In wanton Arethusa's azured arms;
 And none but thou shalt be my paramour!

It was, I dare say, reaction from all this adoration which made Rupert Brooke write his two sonnets, entitled *Menelaus and Helen*, in the first of which he describes Menelaus, sword in hand, bursting into Priam's palace to seize his ravished wife:

'High sat white Helen, lonely and serene.
 He had not remembered that she was so fair,
 And that her neck curved down in such a way;
 And he felt tired. He flung the sword away,
 And kissed her feet, and knelt before her there,
 The perfect Knight before the perfect Queen.'

But disillusionment was to follow. The second sonnet is full of it:

'So far the poet. How should be behold
 That journey home, the long connubial years?
 He does not tell you how white Helen bears
 Child on legitimate child, becomes a scold,
 Haggard with virtue. Menelaus bold
 Waxed garrulous, and sacked a hundred Troys
 'Twixt noon and supper. And her golden voice
 Got shrill as he grew deafer. And both were old.

Often he wonders why on earth he went
 Troyward, or why poor Paris ever came.
 Oft she weeps, gummy-eyed and impotent;
 Her dry shanks twitch at Paris' mumbled name.
 So Menelaus nagged; and Helen cried;
 And Paris slept on by Scamander side.'

I said as many of these lines as I could remember to the tumbled stones of Troy.

I was more interested in my recollections of the history of

Heinrich Schliemann, the German amateur archaeologist, who was born on January 6, 1822, at New Buckow, in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, and died at Naples on December 25, 1890; for Schliemann, like Galileo Galilei, confounded the scholars of the world by proving their firmly-held faith to be wrong.

It is, I fear, a deplorable trait in the character of most of us, that we like to see the erudite confounded; for it is not well that learned men should turn out to be no better than fools. Consider that tale of Galilei and the Aristotelian philosophers and the experiment with the unequal weights at the Leaning Tower of Pisa. In the fourth book of his work, *On the Heavens*, Aristotle lays down this law: 'That body is heavier than another which, in an equal bulk, moves downward quicker,' or, in less compact speech, if a ten-pound weight and a one-pound weight are dropped simultaneously, the ten-pound weight will be the first to hit the ground. Aristotle's statement was made about 350 B.C., and for nearly two thousand years not one learned man in Europe dreamt of disputing it or of testing its veracity. In every school and university where the subject was discussed at all, students were informed by their professors that a heavy body fell faster than a light one, and every student solemnly accepted the statement. About the year 1590, however, a young mathematical professor, Galileo Galilei, tested the law. He climbed the Leaning Tower and, in the presence of the faculty and students of the university of Pisa, dropped two weights, one of them weighing a pound and the other ten pounds, at the same time. They struck the ground together. But were the learned professors convinced by the evidence of their eyes? They were not. They re-read the passage in Aristotle's *On the Heavens* very carefully, and declared that Galilei was making an ass of himself with his experiments. Aristotle had said that the heavier of two weights would, if they were both dropped at the same moment, reach the ground first. And who was Galilei to go about exposing Aristotle with his experiments!

The Professors obviously derived from Plato, who would not allow anyone under the age of fifty to make experiments or even to hear of them. That spirit is not dead. Sir Arthur Eddington, in *The Nature of the Physical World*, describing the law of the Fitzgerald Contraction in terms which make the credulity

of a peasant who believes in the curative powers of a saint's knuckle-bone seem the soundest common sense by comparison with the unaffected faith of the mathematical philosopher, makes an imaginary student inquire, 'Can we not trust our own eyes?', and answers the question with, 'Certainly not.' And what is the law which must be accepted despite the evidence of our minds? One which asserts that if a rod, moving at very high speed, were first to be laid *across* its line of motion, and then were to be turned through a right angle so that it lay *along* that line, it would contract and become shorter along the line of motion than it was when it lay across it; *although it would appear to the eye to be exactly the same length in each instance.*

That is the sort of statement which makes simpletons such as myself chary of listening to learned men. Scoffing atheists attempt to confound my simple faith by reminding me that Dr. John Lightfoot, a Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University in the seventeenth century, calculated that Adam was created at about a quarter to nine on Saturday morning, October 23, 4004 B.C., to which I reply that Dr. Lightfoot's argument was intellectual and logical, and based on exactly the same sort of proof that is offered by scientists to-day in support of assertions that may presently be seen to be no less absurd. It was not an ignorant and superstitious person who made that calculation, but one of the most eminent scholars of his age.

That brings me to Schliemann who, unlike Galilei, was not a scholar, might even be called an ignoramus, but who had the wisdom which is beyond all learning, the wisdom which makes us believe that a poet means what he says. Schliemann was the son of a poor German pastor, and spent his early years in hard and penurious circumstances. He began to earn his living as a grocer's apprentice in Furstenberg, but went to sea as a cabin-boy on the *Dorothea*, which was wrecked while bound for Venezuela. He then entered an office in Amsterdam and heard again the Homeric legends. No convert to religion ever received so much spiritual and intellectual impetus as Schliemann received from the *Iliad*. He was smitten as fiercely by Homer as Paul was smitten by heaven on the road to Damascus. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* became his Old and New Testaments. He was a Homeric Fundamentalist, and did not doubt a word that Homer wrote. The whole of the learned

world might assert, with all the assemblage of erudition it possessed, that Troy was a myth, that the existence of Homer himself was doubtful, that the *Iliad* was probably composed by a succession of authors spread over a long period of time, and that the entire story, though very entertaining, was just a bit of Hellenic nonsense; but Schliemann defied the learned world, asserted his illimitable faith in Homer, and swore an oath in Heaven that he would one day find Troy. And he did!

This astonishing man, in the intervals of earning a living and making a fortune, contrived to master seven or eight languages in addition to his own, including ancient and modern Greek. In 1846 he went from Amsterdam to St. Petersburg, where he began business in the indigo trade on his own account, and eventually made immense wealth, chiefly as a contractor to the Russian Army during the Crimean War. It has been hinted that his honour in that respect was not impeccable, but perhaps those who first impugned it were disgruntled archaeologists. His marriage to a Russian was not a success, and he went to California, where he was when, in 1850, it became a state in the Union. He thereupon acquired the status of an American citizen. In 1868 he transferred his fortune to Greece, and began to visit the Homeric sites; and eventually, despite opposition from the Turkish authorities and the derision of the erudite world, discovered Mycenae and Troy. And to this day it is a little dangerous to mention his name to learned societies and archaeologists.

His whole life seems to have been romantic. 'At eight,' Mr. and Mrs. Lucas say, summarising Emil Ludwig's *Life*, Schliemann, 'fascinated by a ludicrous picture in a child's history book of Aeneas fleeing from Troy . . . vowed that one day he would dig up the ruined city himself:

'At fourteen, a miserable little assistant in a grocer's, he was so thrilled by a drunken young ex-student who recited a hundred lines of Homer in the shop, that he made his customer repeat the passage thrice with the help of three glasses of spirits for which the boy paid the few pence he had in the world. Forty-seven years later this same Niederhöffer, as an old man, was to repeat his Homer before the grocer's boy, now returned to his native place as a world-famous excavator. Schliemann had made money in Russia, then in his thirties set himself to learn Greek. Next he abandoned business for travel and archaeology.

To round off his Hellenic acquisitions, at forty-seven he wrote asking the Archbishop of Athens to choose him a Greek wife, poor but well educated, with "a good and loving heart", and enclose her photograph. The Archbishop obligingly replied with a whole collection of photographs, including one of his own cousin's daughter, Sophia. Schliemann set off to Indianapolis, U.S.A., obtained a divorce from the cold and hostile Russian who had long made him unhappy, arrived in Athens and married Sophia Engastromenos, aged seventeen. What could have been madder? Yet he never made a more fortunate discovery than this young woman who kept her patience when he lost his with the fools who obstructed his work; who consoled him when he despaired, by repeating Sarpedon's great lines from the *Iliad*; and to whom at the end of his life, on the twenty-first anniversary of their wedding, he wrote (in ancient Greek), "I can never glorify our marriage enough. . . . I continually rejoice in your virtues, and by Zeus I will marry you again in the next world." At fifty, amid the sneers and smiles of the learned world, who knew so well that the Siege of Troy was only a solar myth and Homer as fictitious as Agamemnon, he proceeded to dig up Ilios, and to find there a treasure which for the moment opened their eyes and shut their mouths. In 1876 he turned to Mycenae. Again faith was rewarded, in spite of the hysterical jealousies and obstructions of Greek Ministers and prefects and archaeological societies. He must, they insisted, employ not more than fifty or sixty workers; he must be supervised; to be properly supervised he must not excavate in several places at once; he must excavate only inside the circle of the citadel (the experts thought the tombs were certain to be outside). The trouble was not over when these stipulations had been agreed to. There were perpetual scenes between Schliemann and the ephor Stamatakis. The telegraph-wires between Athens and Nauplia hummed with protests, reprimands, recriminations. Repeatedly Schliemann was on the point of throwing up the whole business — "Never in my life will I make any further attempt to be of service to Greece." Stamatakis on his side grew lyrical in his lamentations about being treated "as a barbarian", and "the loss of my health", and "the fanatical Madame Schliemann", and "the dogmatic character, the obstinacy" of the excavator himself.

"Yet the work went forward — statuettes of Hera emerged, and hundreds of clay cows; next, the surrounding wall of the grave-circle, the tombstones, with hunters in chariots. Then one day Madame Schliemann caught sight of a gold ring. The workmen were hurried off; and for twenty-five days Madame Schliemann on her knees with a penknife gradually and delicately unearthed the golden treasure, with a cordon of soldiers drawn round the ancient fortress, while Schliemann relieved his ex-

ciment by wiring to the King of Greece and to the Emperor of Brazil and to Mr. Gladstone, or kneeling down to kiss the gold death-mask of what he believed to be King Agamemnon in person. Today the National Museum of Athens holds his treasure trove — the macabre gold masks from the faces of skulls that crumbled to dust, the gold plaques and goblets and buttons and laurel leaves and butterflies, the swords and battle-axes, the sceptres and gems. It matters little to the romance of this adventure that the skeletons, stiff with gold, appear to have been really generations older than the Trojan War, and to date from 1700 to 1600 B.C. Neither the tomb of Tutankhamen nor the dead of Ur can dim the golden epic of Mycenae.'

Need any wonder that these inspired men keep common men sceptical of those who claim profundity in scholarship? Heaven forbid that erudition should ever be disdained by the semi-illiterate, but heaven forbid, too, that the semi-illiterate should ever become the slaves of the erudite.

xxxvi

We returned to Chanak from Troy in the evening and, looking down on the Dardanelles, saw the bluest water I have ever seen. The dark cliffs of Gallipoli looked grandly sombre behind the blue water, but I could not feel kindly towards them; for they were thick with the dead. Yet our soldiers who fought there retained their ancient cheerfulness, as they retained their right to grumble, even when disease turned their bowels to water. Sir Charles Munro, who led the evacuation of the Peninsula, saw an English soldier lying ill of dysentery on a beach, and said something sympathetic to him. 'I'm all right, sir,' the soldier replied. 'I'm between the Devil and the W.C.!"

xxxvii

Early the next day, Saturday, Mr. Morton, who had given us an uncommonly good lecture the previous evening on the Holy Land, and Mrs. Morton and I landed at Constantinople and were met by Ibrahim Baha, a Young Turk with an idolatrous lover of Kemal. He had all the young man's faith in his own infallibility and that of the people with whom he agreed, but I found him likeable and intelligent, and, although you

enthusiasms excite my cynicism, I greatly admired his eagerness to retrieve his country from its intellectual and social sloth. My feeling for the Turk stops far short of idolatry, nor should I break my heart if he were to pack up his traps and retire from Europe, but this Young Turk moved me by the intensity of his sociological religion. He regarded good drains with as much awe and veneration as a devout Roman Catholic regards a piece of the True Cross. He put his faith not in sultans, but in school-masters. Allah may be great: Ataturk certainly is. Our stay in Constantinople was brief, but Ibrahim Baha made the most of it for us.

The Government of Turkey has abolished veils for women, religion and the fez! Women must show their faces, and men must wear bowler-hats or cloth caps to show that they have been emancipated! An inquiry as to what would happen to a man who walked down a street in Istanbul wearing a fez brought the reply that he would be mobbed, and might accidentally be murdered. Yet there are obstinate women in the rural districts who still cover their faces, though heaven knows those of them whose faces I managed momentarily to see called for concealment only on grounds that were not flattering to them. After I had passed through Syria and Palestine, I began to believe that the veil had its origin, not in religion, but in vanity, and that women to whom the gift of beauty had been denied were the most fervent upholders of the yashmak.

There are no longer packs of scavenger dogs to be seen roving in the streets of Constantinople. Cats abound instead. The dogs had to be destroyed before the Turks would consent to call in the sanitary engineer; and the whole howling packs, I was told, were rounded up and dumped on an island in the Sea of Marmora, where they were left, the strong to devour the weak, and the survivors to die of starvation. A humarer method would have been quicker and more efficient.

The repudiation of religion by the Government has not resulted in the death of religion. On the contrary, it seems to be livelier under Kemal than it was under the Sultan, and our Young Turk admitted that he had seldom seen the mosques so full as they were at the previous Ramadan. I remembered the young men I had seen on their knees in the cathedral at Malaga. A few weeks later the Easter services in Moscow

were thronged. These humourless, hot-hasting young politicians who are determined to have us all in one mould and thinking the same thoughts, imagine, but vainly, that they can abolish in a decade all the beliefs that have animated and inspired mankind for centuries. God takes a lot of abolishing. He has terrific powers of survival and recovery.

The first place we visited was one of the covered cisterns or reservoirs into which the water supply of the city was led through long aqueducts, some of which stretched as far away as Belgrade and are exceedingly ancient. The cistern I saw was said to have been built by Justinian fourteen hundred years ago, and is reached by a long flight of stairs that smell abominably of damp. The roof of the cistern is supported by high, handsome pillars, and the effect on the visitor, of floating in a rowing-boat between them, is eerie. The sound of dripping water and the small splash of oars seemed to make the wet silence more profound, and the hollow noise of subdued voices echoing among the pillars had almost the effect of brawling in church. We came out of the cistern, and went a little way to the great square, which is called the Augustaion. On the north side of this square stands the church of St. Sophia, one of the most beautiful buildings in the world, and on the south side the lovely mosque of Ahmed II, commonly called the Blue Mosque.

The exterior of St. Sophia is a disappointing spectacle: it looks like a broken-down foundry, and contrasts very badly with the Blue Mosque. But the disappointment I felt when I saw its exterior vanished when I entered the church. Its nobility and beauty are indescribable. The spiritual emotion which made it must have been as nearly divine as any human emotion can ever be. Its history is almost as old as European Christianity, which makes the remark, overheard by Father Sir John O'Connell, seem odd. A lady said to her husband, as she entered St. Sophia, 'Was this ever a Christian temple?' The Turks turned it into a mosque and covered the mosaics with whitewash, but it is now a museum, and the whitewash is slowly being removed. The church may yet be recovered for Christianity.

My instinct was to remove my hat in St. Sophia, but I noticed that other people, including a priest, omitted to remove theirs, so, feeling uncomfortable, for I have enough Irish respect

for consecrated buildings to wish to be reverent in them, even if they no longer serve a religious purpose, I retained my hat on my head, and so did Mr. Morton, until Mrs. Morton indignantly bade us uncover. Later in the morning this problem of uncovering the head in a holy place became bewildering. We had entered the Blue Mosque, after putting on old squashed slippers that are supplied by tip-hunting attendants, and had retained, as we were told, our hats on our heads, but were astonished to see our Young Turk immediately remove his, and I, feeling that he must know what was right to do, took mine off. Mrs. Morton whispered to me to keep it on. 'But look at him,' I replied, directing her gaze towards Ibrahim Baha. 'He's a Young Turk,' she replied, 'and is taking off his hat to annoy that Old Turk at the door!' The Old Turk, however, appeared not to mind. When one is as old as he seemed to be, and is secure in one's faith, what does the observance or non-observance of a ritual act matter? For Ibrahim to remove his hat was apparently the same as if an atheist should keep his hat on in Westminster Abbey! I had no wish to hurt an Old Turk's feelings, and I certainly did not wish to embroil myself in politico-religious rows, so I kept my hat on my head. But I was not very happy with it there.

In the church of St. Sophia and in the Blue Mosque, two sects have expressed their faith at its highest, and I wondered why the Moslems, who could design a building so beautiful as this mosque of Ahmed II, beautiful outside as it is inside, should not have built the homes in which the majority of them have to live, nearer to the level of their mosques. Wherever I turned in Istanbul I saw mosques, and each of them looked beautiful, but the residential quarters, especially those inhabited by the poorer classes, are extremely squalid, and the houses, most of which are built of wood, look as if a spark from a cigarette would destroy them. Climbing over the walls of the city or walking through a bazaar, I felt that a great cleansing fire, as extensive as that which made London a heap of cinders, would be a blessing to Constantinople.

The bazaar bored me. Junk merchants would die of hunger if they depended on me for support. A well-made modern article gives me more pleasure than any old thing that is handled with awe merely because it is old; and when I see people hold-

ing reverently some atrocious relic because it has lasted a thousand years, I feel derisive. This is a grave defect in my character, but it is ineradicable. Dare I confess that I value first editions of books as a rule only because of the money that some fool will pay me for them? When it comes to paying large sums for books whose only virtue is a printer's error, I feel that the whole traffic is mad. If we could cultivate the habit of renewing the houses of a city every thirty years, we should do more to civilise mankind than we do in shoring up ancient bug-infested foundations. The fear which restrains us from that useful custom is the fact that the architect may give us foul-looking houses in place of good-looking ones, even if the good looks are chiefly those that age confers.

I left the bazaar with delight, and went off to lunch in a Turkish restaurant which was, Ibrahim Baha told us, very high class, and frequented only by high class people. The lunchers who were present when we arrived looked like broken-down auctioneers, but I am not a good judge of Ottoman aristocrats, and am probably doing them an injustice. The food was superb. It made me feel deliciously sleepy, and, resisting very firmly Ibrahim Baha's efforts to persuade us to visit the ex-Sultan's palace and the Treasury, we returned to the *Laetitia*, which, an hour or two later, sailed up the Bosphorous, past the Golden Horn, to the entrance to the Black Sea. Then we turned again towards the Mediterranean. The dusk was descending on Istanbul as we steamed past, and the lights sparkled on the seven hills. The city looked lovely in the evening light, unmindful of its sorrowful ancient history. Legion after legion had crossed this water on which we sailed into Europe, into Asia and back, victorious or defeated. Byzantium had become Constantinople, Constantinople had become Istanbul. Pagan and Christian and Moslem, Greek, Roman and Turk, all had passed across this water and through that lamplit city, twinkling among its hills, and there is little left to tell the tale of their sufferings and success. A church, a mosque or two, a disused aqueduct, some crumbling walls — no more than those to show for twenty-two centuries of pain and effort. At the end of all that time a man must wear a cloth cap by order of the Government to show that he is civilised! . . .

Adjoining a mosque, to which we could not obtain admission

because its custodian was absent, there was a school, in the playground of which a crowd of children played and shouted happily. Ibrahim Baha was moved by the spectacle and, pointing to the children, said a little sententiously, 'The Young Turks of the future!' He had the fervour almost of a fanatic, and I sympathised with him, although I wondered why he should suppose that these young, when they grow up, will hold his opinions. Ataturk will try to make them think as Ibrahim Baha thinks, for it is true, as Plato remarks in *The Laws*, that 'the legislator can persuade the minds of the young of anything: so that he has only to reflect and find out what belief will be to the greatest public advantage, and then use all his efforts to make the whole community utter one and the same word in their songs and tales and discourses all their life long.' But can we trust the legislator to find out what belief will be of the greatest public advantage? May we not feel certain that he will find out only what is to *his* advantage for the young to believe? In these carefully controlled communities the citizen, as Mr. Walter Lippmann says in *The Method of Freedom*, is 'a conscript':

'In principle his life is dedicated to the state, in practice it is dedicated to the officials who issue his orders to him. The law is the will of the rulers above him. *They* are subject to no law. There are no customs, contracts, constitutions or ancient usages which limit *them*. His rulers are controlled only by their own judgment and by the scope of their own power. In war time this monopoly of absolute power rests upon physical force and patriotic feelings. If it is to be perpetrated when the emergency is passed, popular assent has to be created. That requires to begin with an absolute censorship on information and opinion, and the complete abolition of all freedom of discussion. But that is not enough. There must be positive assent if the multitude is to execute the plans of its rulers. It is necessary, therefore, to indoctrinate the people with the official view. An absolute state monopoly of news, propaganda, education and culture is required. . . .'

and such, I interrupt the quotation to say, as Plato demanded:

'... Nothing must be known to the people which might cause doubt or disloyalty. Nothing must be uttered that might disturb them. They must be overwhelmed. They must be drilled. They must be stuffed with the official view of all things, of all contemporary events, of the past, of the future, of the constitution of the universe and the providence of God.'

There is, of course, a ferment in every soul which, in some degree, brings the legislator's tyranny to a test and keeps the community fresh and sweet. The young cannot be persuaded by the legislator to think as he does 'all their life long', as Plato believes they can: they have their own thoughts. Those reactionaries, as they are called, who say that the state should do no more than teach the people to read and write and do arithmetic have more reason in their heads than even they suppose; for they are asking, though they may not realise it, that the people shall be taught by the state only how to use the apparatus of thought, but not what they should think; how to read, but not what to read! . . .

I glanced up at the bridge, and saw figures moving rapidly across it. Young Turkey was going home! . . .

We swung into the Sea of Marmara, down towards the Dardanelles, away from long and bitter memories of old and modern wars. We were bound for Mitylene which, on the map, looks like a painter's broken palette; but I did not intend to land on that island. There were to be long and tiring excursions from Smyrna to Pergamos and Ephesus, and I wished to save myself for one of them.

I was summoned to the bridge at seven on the morning after we left Istanbul by Captain Baillie, one of those Scots who give you confidence, not only in them, but in yourself, so that I might see Suvla Bay and Anzac Beach before we lost sight of Gallipoli. This was familiar ground to him, for he had fought here in the War. We looked, but scarcely spoke. There was nothing to say. More than half our lives have gone, and a rich part of them was spent in strange contention, and there is nothing to say. Bad news from Europe had come aboard by wireless telegraphy and we speculated on its effect. We had gone to war to end war, but seemed only to have made greater occasion for war! He told me a story of an old lady who, when a ship was in trouble, inquired of its commander if there was any fear. 'Yes, ma'am,' he said, 'plenty of fear, but no danger!' I hoped the story had point for us, and went back to bed.

That afternoon we reached Mitylene - 'Why are we going to see Mussolini?' a lady was reported to have inquired - and on the next day we lay off Smyrna, a very ancient town, founded a thousand years before the birth of Christ, which the Turks

call Izmir. Mr. and Mrs. Morton went off to Pergamos, but I felt idle, and would not go with them, a decision for which I was subsequently sorry, for they returned to say that Pergamos is a place that no one should miss. I loafed about Smyrna with Mr. and Mrs. W. Field-Till, and drove with them through a more thrilling bazaar than any I had yet seen. But Smyrna, though its recent history is full of unhappiness, need not detain anyone long. Taken from the Turks and given to the Greeks under the Treaty of Sèvres, it was recovered by the Turks after some very bloody fighting, and in their hands it remains. An Englishman who lives in Smyrna, told me that the town, a smiling place, was once 'a little Paradise', but that since it had come under the control of the semi-Bolshevist Government, led by Kemal Ataturk, the charm has departed, and in its place are suspicion and insecurity, taxation and unrest. Everything is monopolised — and good government does not associate with monopolies: a fact which should detain the mind of the man who would nationalise everything. There are British subjects in Smyrna whose families have conducted business there for at least a century. Their plight, though not parlous, is one of great anxiety. To leave Smyrna means to ruin themselves, since their business is entirely local and must be conducted in Smyrna or not at all. To remain is to be harassed continually by vexatious inquiries, impositions and restraints. The Turks are eager, on the slightest excuse, to confiscate their property, but are unwilling at present to do so because they are aware of their own unfitness to manage it efficiently. Bribery, corruption and inefficiency are still concomitants of Ottoman government. The itching palm is still extended in the East. Young Turks may succeed in reforming Old Turkey, but an essential preliminary to that reform is their own. . . . Smyrna was quiet enough when I was there, a sunlit town, through which rickety carriages were drawn by leisurely horses, to whom the speed of a motor-car must have seemed an outrage on all decency; but what a fearful town it was a few years ago, when the Turks came down in an overwhelming horde and drove the Greeks into the Mediterranean and watched them drown in masses. They swept down on Smyrna from the mountains and rounded up all the young men, like cattle, and, like cattle, killed them. Young children and very



A SCENE ON THE ISLAND OF THASOS

Left to right: H. V. Morton, a Greek girl in peasant dress, and St. John Ervine

From a photograph by Mary Morton

and feeble men and women were allowed to live and escape, but adult and desirable girls were taken away to be ravished. Such is the Turk, and such, it seems, are we all, when we are inflamed by war. Mankind has yet to be civilised. Sitting behind the sleepy driver, who flicked a fly away when he could rouse himself to so much effort, I found it hard to realise how horrible these streets had been so short a time ago with the painful cries of tormented people. Do these stones ever cry out at night with the anguish they have seen?

XXXVIII

It was now the middle of March, and on Tuesday, the 18th, I went by train with Mr. and Mrs. Morton and Professor Duncan and some British residents in Smyrna to Ephesus, some fifty miles south of Smyrna. Nearly all the cruisers accompanied us, and in addition there were a Turk and his wife and sister-in-law: two girls with large melting eyes. He was a fine, adventurous-looking chap, who had been a prisoner of war in our hands, and was not at all pleased with the way he had been treated. But he had learnt English uncommonly well. Mr. and Mrs. Morton were hoping to leave the *Laetitia* that night, to travel into Asia Minor to seek traces of St. Paul at Konya, the Iconium of the New Testament, Aleppo and Antioch, and to rejoin us about a fortnight later at Haifa; but the Turks were suspicious, as usual, and there was so much argument about their motives in visiting these places that they wondered whether they would be able to go to them. The Turk who accompanied our party was to be their guide.

It was not until late that night that they knew for certain that they would be permitted to travel, nor were they permitted until they had deposited thirty pounds as a guarantee of good behaviour. These arbitrary gentlemen who are running about the earth uplifting mankind and loving humanity in the abstract so much that when they contemplate humanity in the concrete they lose their tempers, are making the world less and less safe for everybody. I wish an infinite amount of harm to these bossy men, from Moscow to Dublin, from Angora to Berlin.

The journey to Ephesus lasted for two hours, and as this was my first journey into Asia, for Troy was on the coast

absorbed in all I saw. The country is beautiful in a neglected way, looking in places like a handsome woman who has forgotten to brush her hair, and Ephesus itself is situated in exquisite surroundings. 'Although my sojourn there was extended over the greater part of eleven years,' says J. T. Wood in *Discoveries at Ephesus*,¹ a rather disorderly work which weighs over five and a half pounds and is no sort of a book to read in bed, 'I never became weary of the scenery by which I was surrounded, for the mountains on which my eyes daily rested changed from hour to hour as the sun travelled on its course, and the desolation of the place was fully compensated by its constant and never-ceasing loveliness.' The swamps through which our train toilsomely and slowly made its way — the same journey used to occupy three and a half hours in Wood's time — are full of wild beasts, especially pig, and provide much entertainment for those who are happiest when they are killing things; but not a sign of any of these creatures did I see either on the way to Ephesus or on the return to Smyrna. A Levantine who was sitting by my side pointed periodically to clumps of high grass and assured me that they were probably full of pig: fierce and tusky brutes that must be approached with great care and discretion. I think he said there were leopards in these swamps, but of this I am uncertain. I inquired where the sportsmen slept during their expeditions, for houses of any sort were few, and hotels seemed not to exist; and was told that it is customary for them to sleep in their own tents. The journeys are accompanied by danger, not only from pig and other obstinate beasts that are unwilling to be led like lambs to the slaughter, but from malaria, which rises from the marshes of the River Caÿster, and, I afterwards learnt from Wood, had depopulated Ayasalouk, the station town for Ephesus, and Ephesus itself. The Ephesians retreated to the high hills surrounding the swamps and established a village which is called Kirkenjee. Ayasalouk, now known as Seljuk, derives its name from the great cathedral, the Hagios Theológos or church of St. John the Divine, which was built in Justinian's time on the rocky hill which stands near the railway station. It was in-

¹ A posthumous work by Wood, entitled *Discoveries on the Site of Ancient Ephesus*, included in the *By-paths of Biblical Knowledge Series*, adds little to the information given in *Discoveries at Ephesus*.

habited permanently by about twenty persons when Wood was exploring Ephesus, but this population was considerably increased during the sowing and harvest times by migrants from Kirkenjee who came to plant and reap tobacco in the ruins. It is a larger town to-day than it was in Wood's time, but is still a down-at-heel place, and its inhabitants have that appearance of dejection which is observable only in people who are stewing in their own juice. They have not lost hope: they never had any hope to lose; and they are filling in the time between the cradle and the grave by playing backgammon and spitting. They slouch about with their hands deeply thrust into their pockets wondering, it seemed to me, why they were born. Ayasalouk, in addition to being the site of the Artemision, contains other ruins of interest to archaeologists: the Emperor Justinian's memorial church to St. John, already referred to, which is said to have replaced an earlier church in which the body of the saint was buried; and, on the same hill, but a little lower down the slope than the cathedral, the remains of a magnificent mosque which was built by the Seljuk, Isa Bey II of Aidin, in 1375.

Ephesus must have been a delightful place in Paul's time, and I thought of it as a city full of charming, cultured men and women, living amiably aloof from other and more contentious people, much in the way that academic Oxford and Cambridge are aloof, and yet alive and brisk and, indeed, contentious; but a little reflection soon caused me to realise that Ephesus, in Paul's day, was a crowded city, inhabited by chaffering merchants and a mob that had to be entertained with the rough usages of the arena. I was committing the common fault of attributing to the past the serenity of the ruined present. Seated in the silence of Ephesus, and looking at the remains of a school which reclined under the shadow of a graceful hill, I yielded too easily to the sentimentality which makes us suppose that the past was full of leisure and cool thought and kindly ways of living. Ephesus seemed horrific to Paul and his Macedonian followers, Caius and Aristarchus, who were 'rushed' into the theatre outside which I sat, the only theatre that is mentioned in the Bible, though what was done to them there is not recorded.

On the way to Ephesus we saw a great variety of birds,

including schools of storks wheeling in a singularly beautiful flight, lovely as silver aeroplanes under a blue sky. This was my first view of these birds, and I confess myself their unreasoning admirer, intensely eager that the attempt to reintroduce them to Great Britain shall succeed. We passed a 'village' of them, situated in a clump of olive trees, and saw others that had built their nests, shallower than those we had seen in the trees, on the roofs of houses. I counted six nests on one side of the roof of a small farm-house, each nest having a pair of storks on it. If there were as many storks on the other side of the roof, and if each clutch is, as clutches usually are, three eggs, the roof population of that farm-house must have been congested soon after I saw it, and the fortune of its inhabitants extremely rosy; for the stork is supposed to bring good luck to the people on whose roof it settles. Wood, in *Discoveries at Ephesus*, describes storks as lazy birds because they take a long time to build their nests — a conclusion which seems to me to have no relevance to the premise — but I prefer them to jerry-building birds or to that over-rated creature, the cuckoo, which does not build any nest, but meanly shoots its eggs into a neighbour's. I know a man who prides himself on the fact that he destroys every cuckoo's egg he sees, and I thoroughly approve of his action. I cannot think of anything more boring than the cuckoo's continual insistence, in two notes, on a fact that is plain to everybody, namely, that spring is here; and the wretched, sneaky-minded bird harps on the information long after it is out of date. This was the only place during my whole journey where I saw many birds. When, later on in Palestine, I remarked on this fact to my friend, Mr. W. A. Colegate, he said that a bird's life in Southern Europe and the Near East is very brief: birds are quickly caught and eaten. 'The reason why they are plentiful in Turkey is that the Turks are too lazy to trap them!' But I thought to myself that perhaps the Turks like birds and are willing to let them live. Be that the reason or not, birds of every sort abound on the road to Ephesus, cranes and storks, kingfishers and black water-hens with red beaks, and a host of others that I could not identify. Colonel Frederick Balfour, who talks about birds and trees better than any other person I have ever met, told me how to distinguish between a crane and a stork. The difference, if I remember aright, is a detail of

wing structure: the stork's feathers seem to be separate, the crane's to be all of a piece.

I fear I spent more time in looking at storks than is justifiable in any tripper who has only a little while in which to see the sights, and I became so closely absorbed in them that I nearly forgot to look at the temple of Diana of the Ephesians, which would have been a dreadful piece of neglect, although, as the foundations of the temple, all that remains of it, were under water, that neglect might have been pardoned. I am not a good tourist, and I behave very badly about ruins. Guides despair of me. I show no signs of interest when they tell me how many gallons of water a reservoir holds, nor am I stricken with awe when a clumsy-looking jar is exhibited and I am informed that it is about two thousand years old. We make much better jars to-day! . . . Outside the railway station at Ayasalouk, which is a mile or two from old Ephesus, are the remains of an aqueduct. On top of each pillar a pair of storks had nested, and I sat outside a bare-looking café, where I was supplied with that villainous stuff which the Turks call coffee, a mixture, it seems to me, of sand and treacle, and regarded them with undisguised admiration. At intervals a stork would throw back its head and, uttering a queer harsh noise, beat its mandibles together as if they were castanets. It was a very funny performance, but likeable, and the storks could not repeat it too often for my taste. I did not see any of them indulging in the more ludicrous ceremonies of their courtship; leaping from the ground with extended wings in an amatory dance; but experience must have taught the storks of Ayasalouk that the top of a broken pillar is no place for such antics, and that the hen, if she *will* live there, must put up with a modified expression of the cock's affection. The stork is said to be voiceless, and perhaps the noise I heard at Ayasalouk was only the sound of beating bills, but it was a good effort at singing for a dumb bird to make, and immensely superior to the harsh utterance of the peacock which I had heard squawking outside a Greek church at Salonica. Few sights are so lovely as the spectacle of a stork, with red bill and red legs, standing on a pillar, its long white body gleaming against a blue sky. The sight entranced me so much that if I had not been in the company of strong-minded men and women that morning I might

have remained outside the aqueduct at Ayasalouk and have missed Ephesus itself, which would have been a great misfortune.

XXXIX

It would be impertinent of me to describe Ephesus as if I were a learned man, and the reader, if he is sufficiently interested, had better read J. T. Wood's *Discoveries at Ephesus*; Sir William Ramsay's *Letters to the Seven Churches*; and D. G. Hogarth's two volumes, *Excavations at Ephesus: the Archaic Artemisia*; but it would be equally impertinent, and almost a fraud, if I were to take money from him for this book and then invite him to look elsewhere for information. I therefore offer him here the result of my own reading about Ephesus on the strict understanding that I have no right to call myself even superficially acquainted with the subject. This book is a record of impressions and opinions, reinforced by the learning of other men and the most I can hope to do in the way of instructing my readers is to pass on to them, summarily and as accurately as possible, the knowledge I have received from my betters. I shall begin by offering an apology to the wraith of J. T. Wood, wherever, in this universe, he is pursuing his archaeological researches. He conferred immense benefit on the scholars of the world by his discovery of the Temple of Diana of the Ephesians and other monuments of a departed time, but the scholars of the world have not done him the elementary service of seeing that an account of his life is published in the standard works of reference. There is no mention of him in the *National Dictionary of Biography*, nor does his name appear in Chambers's *Biographical Dictionary*. D. G. Hogarth refers to his discoveries in an article on Ephesus in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, but that work does not contain a biography of the man himself.

John Turtle Wood, a member of a Shropshire family, and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, who was born at Hackney, North London, on February 13, 1821, and died at Worthing on March 25, 1890, aged sixty-nine years, was drawn to the buried ruins of Ephesus as irresistibly as Heinrich Schliemann was drawn to ruined Troy. In May 1863, while practising as an architect in Smyrna, Wood began, at his own expense, to search for the Artemision. Knowing

how limited were his means and how long and difficult and costly the search for the Temple might be, even if it were successful, he wisely resolved to qualify for a grant from the Trustees of the British Museum by investigating ruins already discovered in the hope, first, of finding some indication of the site of the Temple and, second, of discovering remains which would warrant the Trustees in confiding any sum of money to him. He was almost hopelessly hampered in his search for the Temple of Artemis by the lack of information about its whereabouts. The ancients were as vague about directions to the Temple as they were enthusiastic about its magnificence; and they conflicted so thoroughly that there were times when it seemed to Wood that he must turn up every inch of Ephesian soil before he could expect to find the site. Such a task, of course, was beyond his resources, even if the Turkish Government had been willing to give him a firman for it or the local landowners had consented to let him loose on their property, so he surveyed the ground where the Temple was supposed to have stood, and considered how best he could dig for the ruins without reducing himself, financially, to their state, and studied intensely the works of the ancients. He concluded that he could usefully depend on Strabo, Pausanias and Philostratus 'as my best guides . . . because they have been eye-witnesses of the things they described:

'Of these three, Philostratus appeared to give the most valuable information as to the probable site of the Temple, in his description of the stoa, or portico, built by Damianus. It seemed, then, that the Portico of Damianus was only 600 feet long, and that if I could find it, I had merely to follow it for that distance, and I must inevitably find the Temenos of the Temple.'

His first and not unnatural belief, in view of the lie of the land was that the Temple stood on an elevation between the city and the sea, but at the end of five months of fruitless search, he had to abandon this belief which had cost him dear: he had spent a good deal of his income and had broken his collar-bone and sustained other injuries through the fall of his horse into a dry ditch. This accident held him up for a month. He then began to probe among the ruins of the Great Gymnasium for the Portico of Damianus, but found only some Roman remains

and evidence that certain pillars which are to be seen in the Mosque of St. Sophia in Istanbul and are alleged to have been brought there from the Temple of Diana of the Ephesians, could not possibly have stood in the Artemision, since they are made of Egyptian syenite, whereas the pillars in Diana's Temple were made of white marble which was taken, not from Mount Prion and Coressus, on whose lower slopes Ephesus lies, but from the quarries at Kos Bunar, about seven miles north-east of Ephesus. Some scholars thought that the Great Gymnasium was the Temple itself or that it had been raised on the foundations of the Temple, but Wood had evidence to prove that the last Temple has existed contemporaneously with the Great Gymnasium for nearly three centuries. He discovered also that 'the whole plain of Ephesus had been silted up to the average height of twelve feet within the last fifteen centuries', a discovery which must have annoyed him very considerably since it indicated that the Temple was more deeply hidden than he had supposed. During this period, he was greatly vexed and delayed by suspicious authorities and various gentlemen who, fancying that he was in search of buried treasure, saw no reason why they should not share in the spoil. These gentry made trouble for him with the Pasha of Smyrna, who forbade him to make any more excavations until his representatives had done some digging of their own. It was not until the Pasha realised that there were no hidden hoards of gold and silver and precious stones to be despoiled that he withdrew his ban on Wood's operations and allowed him to continue his work; but he filled up some of the trenches which Wood had dug and would not compensate him for the expense which excavating them again entailed. Local landowners also complained of the holes Wood had made in their land, but their complaints were reasonable and were amicably settled in almost every case. Inclement weather interfered with his excavations, and at the end of February 1864, his depression was almost complete. He 'had spent as much time and money as my circumstances would permit', and had not found the Portico of Damianus, and had no idea where the Temple of Diana might be.

His situation was infinitely worse than Schliemann's had ever been; for Schliemann was very rich and could buy as much labour as he required, whereas Wood was a man of

moderate means and could afford to hire only a few labourers who were easily tempted away from him by the higher wages offered by the contractors engaged in making two railway tracks in that part of Asia Minor or by the owners of coal and emery mines or the wharfingers at Smyrna Quay. He suffered severely from incompetent and dishonest workmen, and was in difficulty over the mere matter of obtaining a suitable lodging. At first he travelled daily from Boudjah, a village near Smyrna, to Ayasalouk, the station for Ephesus. He walked a mile and a half to meet the train which left Smyrna at six in the morning, and then travelled south about fifty miles in the train, taking three and a half hours to reach his destination. Wood's account of his life at this period is unemotionally written, but I find it moving, and I am sympathetically stirred by the thought of that patient, poor man endeavouring, despite every discouragement, to find a Temple and, in the end, finding it. He describes his day:

'The six and a half hours which elapsed between the arrival of the train at Ayasalouk and its return in the afternoon, I spent in walking to and from the place where my men at that time were working, in searching about the plain and studying the ground, and superintending the workmen. Often I took to digging myself during the men's dinner hour, as well as at other times, when I was impatient at the slow movements of the men, or their unskilful mode of going to work. I had further to take notes and measurements, and make drawings of everything that was found. Then there was the return journey by railway, and the walk home. I was sometimes so over-excited by the hard day's work, that I ran most of the distance between the station and the village. The whole day's work occupied between fourteen and fifteen hours.'

I cannot withstand my feeling of emotion when I think of the tired archaeologist, returning at night to his hotel at Budjah with nerves so fretted by bewilderment and exasperation that he could not walk the distance, but must run.

At the end of ten months, and after the expenditure of all the money he could afford for his investigation, Wood was no nearer to the solution of the problem he had set himself than he had been at the beginning. How could he expect the Trustees of the British Museum to make him a grant when he had nothing to show them in return for his own expenditure?

It was then he remembered to have seen at Venice a church whose front 'was decorated with pilasters on pedestals, upon which pedestals were carved, if I remember rightly, the plans of Cyprus, Rhodes, and two other cities'. Might there not be among the ruins of Ephesus 'similar bas-reliefs . . . some idle scratchings, which might indicate the direction, if not the exact position, of the Temple in reference to the city'? 'If not even this, I might, perhaps, find some inscription, giving me a clue to its site.' He thereupon applied to the Trustees for a grant of £100 to enable him to explore the Great Theatre and the Odeum, and this grant was made, but on the condition that he restricted his explorations to the Odeum. A number of interesting remains were found, but not the direction to the Temple which he sought; and the progress of the excavation was impeded by labour troubles and lack of funds.

In October, he had to discharge his ganger, an incompetent Catholic, and the workmen, because he came upon them 'quietly seated, doing nothing'. It was not until December that he could resume his investigations owing to a subscription of £87 from a few friends. In 1865, operations were almost entirely suspended chiefly because his funds were spent, but also because he was nearly killed by a lunatic. This crazy fellow, having first stabbed the agent for the Cassaba Railway, for which line Wood was then building a terminal station, next attacked Wood, driving his knife within an inch of his heart. Wood was also in danger of attack in this year from a gang of ten bandits who were convinced that he had large sums of money in his possession. He was never actually attacked by them, but the fear that he might be, the precautions he had to take to guard himself, and the constant anxiety which these precautions aroused, acted adversely on his health, and it is a matter for amazement that he did not throw up the attempt to find what seemed to be unfindable.

But he was encouraged to continue in his search by a discovery he made one evening when 'my weary foot, scarcely lifted from the ground, struck against a block of marble which on examination, proved to be carved with the head of a Greek cross in a sunk panel:

'I excavated the next day in this place, which was not far from the Odeum. The marble proved to be a door-jamb with

sunk panels, the upper one having a large cross, the lower one having the figure of a bull or buffalo of the country, with a small cross cut over its back. On the inner side of the door-jamb there were the remains of a human figure which had been carved upon it. This had evidently represented a saint or a martyr. The head had been encircled by a nimbus, which, having been sunk in the marble, remained perfect. One or two persons who have seen it, think they can trace the remains of a sword which had been through the body, thus representing a martyr.'

He had, he thought, found the Tomb of St. Luke, and went eagerly to consult the Greek Archbishop of Smyrna, who had a good library of ecclesiastical books. The historians contradicted each other about the death and burial-place of St. Luke, some saying that he had been hanged at Patras, and others saying that he had died at Ephesus; but the Archbishop and Wood, on grounds which are not stated, agreed that the saintly physician must have been buried beside the Odeum. The Archbishop, very oddly, seems not to have known or, since such ignorance in an eminent ecclesiastical seems incredible, not to have told Wood that the most widely believed tradition is that St. Luke died in Bithnyia when he was seventy-four years of age. The legend that he was buried in Ephesus is about as substantial as the legend that St. John brought the Virgin Mary to Ephesus after the Crucifixion and that she died there.¹

By this time news of Wood's investigations began to reach the ears of tourists, and he makes some observations of a tart nature on his visitors, among whom the Americans alone emerge with credit. There was an international party which came, accompanied by lavish luncheon-baskets, to see the ruins of the Odeum, but was more intent on its food than it was on the theatre. 'After lunching in a pleasant shady place near the Odeum, they could not be persuaded to enter the Little Theatre and see what remained of it.' Worse still were the three hundred persons who dined in a marquee near the Great Theatre, of whom 'only six or eight were persuaded after dinner

¹ Sir William Ramsay, who is sometimes tantalisingly sparing with information, says in *The Letters to the Seven Churches* that 'the home and grave of the Mother of God have been recently discovered by the Roman Catholics of Smyrna, aided by visions, prayers and faith; and the attempt has been made in the last ten years to restore the Ephesian myth to its proper place in the veneration of the Catholic Church. The story is interesting, but lies beyond our subject'. (Page 218.)

to enter the Theatre'. My conscience smote me when I read those complaints, for I, too, behave badly about inspecting ruins, and I thought to myself that there, but for the grace of God, went I. To take the trouble to visit the Odeum merely to munch sandwiches which might as easily be munched elsewhere without all the toil and trouble of walking through the heat to see a ruin, and not even to look at the ruin – that, I glumly confessed to myself, was the sort of thing of which I might have been guilty. Such was the affection Wood had aroused in my mind that I swore an oath in heaven never again to neglect a ruin, but, food or no food, fatigue or no fatigue, boredom or no boredom, at least to look at anything there was to see, for his sake. When I reflect what dangers he endured, what fevers he suffered, what disappointments he sustained, how much of his time and money he spent to discover the Temple of Diana, my heart misgives me when I also think of how little attention I gave to the Temple when I saw it. I must offer an oblation to his memory! . . .

It was not until February 1866, that Wood obtained another grant from the Trustees of the British Museum and was well enough to resume his explorations. He had evidently persuaded the Trustees to let him use the money for an investigation of the Great Theatre, for he started operations there at once. This is one of the largest theatres in Asia Minor, and is supposed to have seated 24,500 persons. It is celebrated among Christians as the probable scene of the disturbance referred to in the nineteenth chapter of *The Acts of the Apostles*, when St. Paul was with difficulty prevented from entering the theatre to rescue his 'companions in travel', the Macedonians, Aristarchus and Gaius, who had been 'rushed with one accord into the theatre' by silversmiths, indignant because their profitable trade in statues of Diana was seriously threatened by Pauline denunciations. Wood found many interesting and valuable fragments in the Great Theatre, but at the end of two years, in 1868, from the day on which he began to explore it, or five years from the day on which he began his general investigation, he still had not found the Temple or any trace of it. Funds had an unfortunate habit of giving out, and his health was now causing anxiety to his friends, who tried to persuade him to return to England to rest and recuperate, but it was not until

April 1867 that he became ill enough for him to feel that he must take their advice. On his return in September he found that his furniture had been stolen and his house wilfully rendered uninhabitable.

But he was less upset by this outrage than he might pardonably have been, for he had discovered a series of decrees on the eastern wall of the southern entrance to the stage of the Great Theatre which eventually enabled him to find the Temple. These decrees related:

'to a number of gold and silver images, weighing from three to seven pounds each, which were voted to Artemis and ordered to be placed in her Temple by a certain wealthy Roman, named C. Vibius Salutarius. At the same time he gave a sum of money by way of endowment for keeping them clean and in order. On a certain day of assembly in the Theatre, viz., May 25, which was the birthday of the goddess, these images were to be carried in procession from the Temple to the Theatre by the priests, accompanied by a staff-bearer and guards and to be met at the Magnesian Gate by the Ephebi or young men of the city who, from that point, took part in the procession, and helped to carry the images to the Theatre. Among the statues enumerated in the inscription are those of Artemis, with two stags, and a figure, probably a female, representing the city of Ephesus. In one of the decrees contained in this inscription, the consuls of the year A.D. 104 are mentioned. In another, the Emperor Trajan is mentioned as then reigning. The date of the whole inscription is probably not much later than A.D. 104. It will be observed that the procession above described made the complete circuit of the city, and in its course the images must have been seen by a great number of inhabitants, and thus the vanity of C. Vibius Salutarius was gratified as far as these statues were concerned.'

It is an ironic thought that if it had not been for the vanity of C. Vibius Salutarius, who was perhaps an upstart of the time, the sort of person who contributes heavily to some charitable purpose in return for a title, Wood might never have found Diana's Temple; for it was that procession, carrying his graven images of the many-breasted goddess of fertility from the Temple through the Magnesian Gate to the Great Theatre which gave Wood the clue he had sought so long. He had but to find the Magnesian Gate, and it would probably lead him to the Temple.

At the end of the year 1867 he found it 'near to the Opisthodrepanian Gymnasium, close to the mound around which I

found the city wall', 'at the end of the ravine between Mounts Prion and Corresus', the two mountains at whose feet old Ephesus lies. Wood's recollection of the pilasters on pedestals which he had observed in Venice had served him well. So had his instinct to search in the Great Theatre rather than in the Odeum. He was justified in his persuasion of the Trustees of the British Museum to let him violate their condition that he should use their grant only for research in the Odeum. The inscription spoke of the procession entering Ephesus through the Magnesian Gate and emerging from it on its return to the Temple by the Coressian Gate. He discovered that the two mountains were inaccurately named on the English Admiralty Chart, that the round mountain which was there named Prion was properly called Coressus, and that the saw-like mountain there called Coressus was really Prion. It was now apparent to Wood that the Temple lay towards Ayasalouk, for although the road from the Magnesian Gate divided, one branch leading towards the Ephesus Pass and then on to Magnesia and Maeandrum, and the other branch to Ayasalouk, the latter was plainly the more important path, being 'thirty-five feet in width, and paved with immense blocks of marble and limestone', and 'very deeply worn into four distinct ruts, showing the constant passing and repassing of chariots and other vehicles. The road leading to Magnesia, on the other hand, showed little or no wear, the marks of wheels being scarcely discernible'. He had now to find some proof that he was working in the right direction before the last grant made to him by the Trustees was fully expended, so that he could go to them for another and larger grant. 'I was satisfied in my own mind that I was making fair progress:

'Of this, however, I had to convince the Trustees, that I might obtain the necessary funds to continue the excavations. I therefore opened up the outer side of the road around the mountain, in search of a road which led away from it towards the open plain, where I thought the Temple must inevitably be found. I succeeded in exploring five hundred yards of the road in this manner by the time my funds were exhausted. At this distance from the gate, I found stone piers of a portico which must have been that of Damianus. . . .'

He was well on his way to the Temple, and could return to

England with a confident heart and a right to further funds. Among the resolutions he now made was one not to work in Ephesus in the summer months:

‘One of the difficulties in conducting excavations at Ephesus, and one of my greatest enemies, was the fever which prevails there, and which is generated by the extensive marshes near the river Cayster on the north side of the city. I was not sufficiently careful, and for years took no precautions, such as generous living and occasional relaxation would have afforded me against the common foe. I was therefore a constant sufferer, and my courage and powers of endurance were put to severe tests, and threatened from time to time with breakdown. Other hindrances, difficulties and dangers were caused partly by the vexatious stoppage of the work by the different Pashas of Smyrna, who succeeded each other so rapidly that as soon as I had propitiated one of them I found myself obliged to conciliate another; and in part by the insufficiency or inefficiency of workmen. Large parties of my best workmen were sometimes taken without notice by the railway companies and others. Then, too, my life was repeatedly threatened and even attempted; and there was always the danger of injury from falling earth and stones, from which I had many narrow escapes. But above all these there was the fear of failure for want of funds to continue the excavations. This caused me constant anxiety at that time. . . .’

But the Trustees were agreed on the value of his explorations, and he now had no further cause to fear failure through lack of funds. Towards the end of October 1868, he returned to Smyrna, accompanied by his wife, and soon afterwards unearthed the whole of the Portico of Damianus.

Pausanias, describing Greece, states that the Sepulchre of Androclus, son of Lodrus, King of Athens, and virtually founder of Ephesus, surmounted by the figure of a man in armour, was to be seen in his time ‘in the road which led from the Temple of Artemis to the Temple of Jupiter Olympius and the gates called Magnesian’. Wood found this sepulchre in February 1869, at a distance of 2,600 feet from the Magnesian Gate, but he could not find the Temple of Jupiter. He was lucky enough to light on another and wider road than the one on which he had previously been working: a road for which he had anxiously looked. It led from the foot of the mountain towards the cemetery at Ayasalouk, but the discovery was dashed by the fact that the whole Plain of Ephesus had been

sown with barley which was now nearly at its full height and, therefore, too costly for him to cut. This difficulty was overcome by, so to speak, leaping over the barley in the dark, and trusting to luck that the leap would end in the right direction. It did, though not without alarm to the excavator who, with victory as he believed in sight, found himself threatened by several dangers that would, had they not been avoided, have ended his efforts in failure. The Mudir of Ephesus, that is, the deputy collector of taxes and head of the police, arbitrarily stopped Wood's work on the ground that his firman or authority to make excavations had expired. He had to go to Constantinople to have it renewed for another year. Then, major calamity on minor, the Trustees of the British Museum, after they had made another grant of £200, announced that it would be the last unless he could produce the Temple! . . .

But fortune was favouring Wood, who made another lucky shot and found 'the peribolous wall of the Temenos of the Temple of Artemis, described by Tacitus as having been built by Augustus to restrict the limits of the sanctuary or asylum for criminals which had been unduly enlarged by Alexander the Great, Mithradates, and Mark Antony'. The great quest was practically finished. Wood was on the site of the Temple. 'Six years had elapsed since I had first begun the search. This seems a long time, but the actual time devoted to the search did not extend over more than twenty months, and the cost of the work did not exceed £2,000.' He had now, however, to remove from the Temple the mud, twenty feet in depth, which the Caÿster or its confluent, the Selinus, had deposited on it. That was to be a costly business, but Wood went home at the end of May 1869, a much happier man than he had been for six years. In September he returned to Smyrna, fortified by a grant from the Trustees, and resumed his excavations. At the end of October, he injured his foot severely, but this misfortune brought a blessing in its trail; for Mrs. Wood, who had remained at Smyrna while her husband worked five or six days every week at Ephesus — he was afraid to expose her to the risk of malaria — came to live with him at Ayasalouk, and proved to be not only a most useful assistant, but a nurse-doctor for the entire neighbourhood. 'People came from the villages in great numbers, and she has had sometimes between

sixty and seventy patients in the course of the day.' This remarkable and gallant lady died in 1906.

On December 31 1869, Wood found the white marble floor of the Temple. This turned out to be a Greek pavement and to belong to 'the last Temple but two'. Its discovery excited Wood so much that he suffered from fever for three weeks, but he did not allow this illness to deter him from his labour. It was lucky for him that the ganger he employed at this time, a Greek called Yorghi, was an able and industrious man. 'Before I had the good fortune to meet this man, I had tried not less than eight gangers, who had all been, for various reasons, most unsatisfactory. Of these two were Englishmen, one French, one a Smyrniate Catholic, one Greek, two Turks, and one the son of a converted Turk. The Englishmen, I am sorry to say, were the worst of all.' Soon after the pavement of the Temple had been found, the only fatal accident which occurred during the excavations took place: a black man, a Moslem, was suffocated by a fall of earth. Wood bore the expense of the man's burial, and records the fact that the Mollah grumbled at the amount of the fee he was paid, thirty piastres or about five shillings!

On December 16, Schliemann, who had not yet found Troy, visited the Temple and expressed his delight at treading its pavement. He was in difficulties with the Turks who had stopped him from digging in the Troad, and he asked Wood whether he thought there was any hope of him obtaining a firman to search for Troy. 'I expressed my doubts, as the Turks had made known their decision to grant no more firmans for excavations. He said they might have what was found, as he was anxious only to prove by excavations his own theory about the position of Troy....' This encounter was as notable as the meeting of Livingstone and Stanley.

XL

The rest of the story of discovery need not be detailed. Wood had done his job, and in 1874, against his advice, the British Government decided, on the ground of economy, to discontinue the excavations, which had already cost £16,000. The land, eight acres in extent, on which the Temple stands,

was purchased for the British Museum by Wood, after protracted arguments with the owners, some of whom had difficulty in proving their titles, for the sum of little more than £160; and it remains the property of the Trustees. Wood left Smyrna amid tearful displays of affection, in a British gunboat, the *Cockatrice*, on April 14, 1874. 'It may readily be believed that we did not leave either Ephesus or Smyrna, after a sojourn of so many years, without regret.' He had spent the best part of eleven years there. 'At Ephesus we planted the *Eucalyptus globulosa* (American gum-tree) on the top of the spill banks which surround the great excavation on the site of the Temple of Diana, and as we left the spot slowly and lingeringly, we looked back frequently at the beautiful scene, which had such a fascination for us, and which had been for so many years associated with our united labours.' But he tried, unsuccessfully, to resume his explorations in 1883. In 1896 the late A. C. Murray reported to the Trustees of the Museum that the site was in a shocking condition, desolate and water-logged, and that it should be cleared and the ground around it explored. The Trustees, however, were unable to do anything about it at that time. In 1901 an Austrian expedition attempted, but failed, to find the great altar which had stood before the statue of the Goddess. It was not until the autumn of 1904, after Murray's death, that the Trustees were able to send David George Hogarth to Ayasalouk, where he remained until June 17, 1905, on which date the works were closed. A full account of these operations appears in his book, *Excavations at Ephesus*. 'It had originally been proposed,' says Sir Cecil Smith in his preface to this work, 'to leave the site in the condition in which it stood at the close of the season of 1905; that is, with the pavement laid bare and, so far as possible, cleared of rubbish, and the architectural remains and the evidence of different levels as much exposed as was necessary in order to make the plans and the history intelligible to the studious traveller. Unfortunately this was not to be: probably, as Mr. Hogarth suggests, the low-level excavations had opened up new springs; whatever the cause, the pit in which the Temple lies speedily became a pond, and has remained so ever since.' It was indeed thought by the Turkish authorities to be responsible for an outbreak of malaria which occurred in Ayasalouk

in October 1905, but this belief was held to be unfounded. Other villages around Smyrna had, as a result of abnormal rainfall, suffered no less severely from malaria. But for diplomatic reasons, the Trustees thought it well to 'fill in the site as far as the ordinary water level – that is to say, slightly below the level of the Croesus temple'.

It was this flooded foundation which I saw on the morning I went to Ephesus.

No one knows how many temples were built at Ephesus, but Hogarth gives a list of five sacred places, the first of which was not a temple, but a shrine, erected towards the end of the eighth century B.C. 'This was little more than a small platform of green schist with a sacred tree and an altar, and perhaps later a wooden *eikon* (image), the whole enclosed in a *temenos*.' This shrine was sacked, but afterwards restored, about the year 650 B.C. It was enlarged and raised, but remained essentially the same shrine. It is regarded as the second of the sacred places. Comparatively soon after its restoration it was replaced by a temple, designed by Ctesiphon or Chersiphron, the Cnossian, and his son, Metagenes. It is thought to have been the first regular Artemision, although it was the third sacred place made in honour of Artemis. It was enlarged by an unknown architect. What became of it is not known. Wood asserts that it was 'completed by Demetrius, a priest of Diana, and Paeonius, an Ephesian,' but Hogarth, who had access to later information than was available to Wood, seems to think that the temple built by Demetrius and Paeonius was the fourth edifice or shrine raised on that spot, and that it replaced the temple built by Ctesiphon and his son. He thinks, too, that Paeonius was the architect, and that Demetrius, the priest, was the contracting builder. This is known as the Archaic or Croesus Temple, and is the one discovered by Wood. Croesus contributed to the cost of its erection, and it must, therefore, have been in process of building about 540 B.C. It is said to have taken 120 years to build, and was standing in the time of Herodotus. Its exact dimensions are not known, though Wood boldly estimated them. It stood, he says, on a platform which was 415 feet 1 inch by 239 feet 4½ inches, English measure. The Temple itself, to which worshippers ascended by a flight of fourteen steps, each a little more than

8 inches in height, was 342 feet 6½ inches by 163 feet 9½ inches, and its roof was supported by a hundred pillars, each of which, according to Wood, was about 56 feet high, though Hogarth is sceptical on this point and thinks that Wood's estimate properly refers to the columns of the fifth or Hellenistic temple. Twenty-seven of these hundred columns were gifts from kings, and some of them were handsomely sculptured.

The Temple must have been a lovely sight, a great gem of white marble from its white floor to the big white tiles on its roof; a sight to dazzle the eyes on a sunny morning when strong light burned in a blue sky and storks with red bills and legs stood on the shining roof.

In the *cella* or body of the Temple, part of which is supposed to have been roofless, stood the great statue of Artemis, a figure of a woman with many breasts signifying fertility, which was swathed from the waist to the feet in grave-clothes, and sculptured with lions, rams and bulls. The testimony to the 'multimammia' appearance of Artemis is not clear. Hogarth, in his chapter on 'The Goddess' in *Excavations at Ephesus*, says: 'The site itself, therefore, has still failed to produce evidence for the "multimammia" type in at least the latter part of the life of the Croesus Temple, but, on the other hand, it has offered strong presumption that the Goddess was personified during that period, according to the popular sentiment of the locality, as a natural maternal figure without any "barbaric" and monstrous features. The chief sources of the belief that the Goddess was portrayed as many-breasted and, therefore, the expression of the idea of fertility, are certain coins, some Early Christian writers, such as Jerome, and the famous alabaster figure at Naples.' This figure is reproduced by Wood. 'In these representations,' says Hogarth, 'the Goddess stands stiff, with high *modius* on her head, and feet placed close together. She is swathed from waist to ankles in mummy-like wrappings which are sometimes decorated with figure-scenes, and sometimes present a scaly appearance. The whole front of the figure from throat to waist is covered with pendant dugs, and the arms are extended from the elbow. Behind the head is a sort of "nimbus".' The fact that no 'multimammia' remains have been found on the site of the Temple is sufficient to make us suspect that the 'barbaric' character of the Temple worship

may have been exaggerated or even falsely reported. Hogarth continues: 'So far as the evidence goes there is no proof that this feature of the cult-type was represented before the Christian era; and it is quite possible that never at any time was it so represented in the Artemision at Ephesus itself. It may have been introduced on figurines made elsewhere, through some misapprehension of drapery, swathing bands, or ornament seen on the breast of the West Asiatic cult-type; and so have come to be regarded as typically Ephesian by Christian writers, anxious to collect instances of monstrosity in pagan imagery. Its appearance on a late Roman statuette from Cyrene could equally be explained in this way.'

This Artemis or Diana was a different goddess from the virgin-goddess, Artemis, of the Greeks, although the Greeks of Ephesus asserted that the two were identical and that Ortygia, where the Greek Artemis, the daughter of Zeos and Leto, was born, was near Ephesus and not in Delos. The Ephesian Artemis was said to have been born in a wood, through which the river Cenchrius flowed, in the glen of Arbalia, at the foot of the north slope of Mount Solmissus and a short walk from the railway station at Ayasalouk. It was obviously because of her birthplace that the Temple was built where Wood found it and not in Ephesus itself, and it is odd that the possibility of this should not have occurred to him when he first surveyed the territory: but he was misled by the ancient authors who paid more attention to hearsay than they ought to have done. This statue, in front of which was an altar, was surrounded by smaller statues, some of them, it is thought, the work of Phidias and Praxiteles, and it was enormous, about forty-five feet high. According to tradition, it fell from Jupiter, a tradition of which the harassed town clerk at Ephesus, as reported in *The Acts of the Apostles*, xix. 35, reminded his infuriated townsmen when they rioted against Paul and his companions.

In October 353 B.C., on the same night, it is alleged that Alexander the Great was born, an exhibitionist of the time, one Herostratus, determined to obtain notoriety, even if he had to commit sacrilege to obtain it, set fire to the Temple, which was destroyed. His name was erased from all civic records, and is now known only because an historian, Theopompus, preserved it in one of his works.

The building of the fifth Temple, which is technically known as the Hellenistic, was immediately begun from a design by Dinocrates, an Alexandrian architect. It was larger than the Temple it replaced – its columns are said to have been over sixty feet high – and it was so magnificent that it was included in the Seven Wonders of the World. This Temple was still being erected when Alexander the Great visited Ephesus in 334 B.C. It impressed him so much that he offered to bear the cost of its completion, provided that he was allowed to dedicate it to the goddess in his own name. The condition was not acceptable to the priests of Diana, all of whom were eunuchs, and they skilfully avoided it without giving offence to the conqueror, by saying that 'it is not fitting that one god should build a temple to another god'. This Temple was sacked and burned by the Goths in A.D. 262, but it appears to have been partially restored and to have continued in use until the Edict of Theodosius caused all heathen temples to be shut. It rapidly fell to pieces, the greater part of it being quarried to build the cathedral of St. John Theológos on the adjacent hill at Ayasalouk. Mud silted over its site, burying it, as already stated, twenty feet deep, and under that mud all that was left of the Temple of Diana of the Ephesians remained hidden until Wood uncovered it fifteen centuries later, on the last day of 1869.

XLI

But its Temple is not the only claim Ephesus has on the visitor's attention. Heraclitus, the Dark Philosopher and founder of metaphysics, was born in Ephesus in 540 B.C., the year in which Croesus visited the city and contributed to the cost of erecting the second Temple, designed by Paeonius and built by Demetrius; and we may imagine him, not yet, one hopes, much troubled by philosophical problems, playing among the foundations. What cause for ironic comments he would have, could he see them now, flooded with marsh water? He held his fellow Ephesians in contempt, and perhaps he looked upon the worshippers of Diana with disdain. All that adoration for udders! . . . But even he, cynic though he was, might see something pitiable in the spectacle of so much magnificence reduced to inundated masonry.

His philosophy need not detain us long, since this is not philosophical work, but a tourist's account of his travels, and it will be enough to say that Heraclitus was the first expounder of the principle of Relativity. Life is fluid. 'No man,' says the Indian proverb, 'stands in the same river twice,' for all things are continually changing. Even as I say 'I am,' I am compelled to say 'I was'. The past stretches infinitely far behind us, and the future infinitely far before us, but the present is incredibly brief: a dissolving view. The implication of impermanence is saddening, though why it should be is hard to say, for a static condition does not necessarily imply happiness nor does incessant alteration imply misery. But there is enough stability, or appearance of stability, for us to feel sure of ourselves. Mr. Cecil Fairfield Lavell, in his excellent book, *A Biography of the Greek People*, one of the best summary accounts of its subjects I have read, remarks of Heraclitus that his philosophy 'logically . . . leads to the conclusion that all knowledge is vain', but I dissent from Mr. Lavell's opinion and suggest instead that Heraclitus' philosophy leads to a better conclusion, that all knowledge is relative to truth and that we must not mistake the relative for the absolute, but be ready to scrap an opinion or a belief the moment it ceases to work. The truth may be approached by a thousand paths, some of which are, perhaps, more direct than others, but since we cannot all crowd on to one path, even if we wished to do so, and some of us prefer long, winding ways to short, straight ones, it scarcely matters how we reach the truth so long as we arrive there. One man goes to America by the *Queen Mary* in four and a half days: another man takes a month on a tramp-steamer; but each arrives in his own way, though whether the place is worth the visit is a hard thing to say. Heraclitus appeals to me who fail to find much comfort in Plato, for he confirms my belief in diversity and a harmony which is made up of the greatest number of dissimilar notes; but I sometimes feel that my interest in him is chiefly roused by the epitaph on him written by Callimachus:

'They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead;
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.
I wept as I remembered how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.'

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
 A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,
 Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales awake,
 For death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.'

Who would not feel proud to have had that epitaph written about him?

'I wept as I remembered how often you and I
 Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.'

Good talk and good fellowship, such as Socrates stimulated those nights in Athens when, disregarding the scowling prig, Plato, he wasted the night in conversation with wine-bibbers and gluttons, are the cementing substance of society. There must indeed be a private place in each man's soul where none but he may enter, nor do I know anyone so pitiable as that person who cannot bear to be alone; but company and conversation are the signs of civilisation. No man can evolve by himself. I distrust authors who gloom in solitude; austere, lonely men who cannot mingle with the crowd except on terms of condescension or with intent to pity. Let me be scorned by Heraclitus for my follies, but let me not be pitied by John Galsworthy! . . . Euripides was a skulker in studies, a morose man who preferred to read and write about people rather than to meet them, but Aeschylus and Sophocles shared the tent when there was a tent to share; and Socrates had a friendly word for the cobbler in the market-place. But Socrates of course was put to death in prison, whereas Euripides! . . . Nevertheless, I would rather be Socrates than Euripides, though why I should have digressed like this because of Heraclitus, I cannot imagine.

XLII

We drove away from the submerged foundations of Diana's Temple to the ruins of Ephesus, clustered at the feet of Prion and Coressus, and walked along a narrow, flagged street to the remains of the Great Theatre. Mr. Morton was busy with his camera confirming or correcting the impressions he had received on previous visits to the ruined city, and Professor Duncan was excited by his presence on the scene of his book,

St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry. Over there, on a hill, Astyages, was the fortress commonly called St. Paul's Prison! . . . Sir William Ramsay dogmatically declares 'there is no reason to think that' Paul 'was ever imprisoned in Ephesus', but Dr Duncan will have none of that dogmatism, and expounds with great ingenuity his belief that Paul was imprisoned at least twice in Ephesus and was in grave danger of losing his life owing to the machinations of wicked Jews. It would be impertinent of me to try to traverse any statement Professor Duncan may make about the apostle Paul, for he is an expert on his subject and I am not even an amateur, but I doubt the soundness of his theory that the imprisonment, if it occurred, was due to the plots of wicked Jews. It may be that Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus: he was the sort of man who was almost certain to be imprisoned wherever he went; but is there any reason why he should doubt that his imprisonment in Ephesus, assuming that he was imprisoned there, was due to the infuriated tradesmen whose profitable traffic in silver statues of Diana was endangered by the Apostle's preaching? If any man had a full finger in that pie, Demetrius surely was the man. The row was terrific, and it came at the end of a long period, two years, of Pauline propaganda. Paul had come to Ephesus and found that the Christians had 'not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost'. They had been baptised 'unto John's baptism', and appeared to know very little about the new religion they professed. Paul, shocked no doubt by their imperfect knowledge of their faith, exhorted them so thoroughly that they consented to be 'baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus' and, immediately after the immersion, they fell into one of those religious ecstasies which overcome emotional people and are regarded as a sign that the Holy Ghost has visited them: 'they spake with tongues and prophesied'.

Their ignorance of their religion was not surprising. The Christian Church did not exist as we know it, nor was there a New Testament. The Epistles of St. Paul, if any of them had yet been written, were not assembled, nor would they, if they had been assembled, have been regarded as other than they were, namely, letters to friends and followers in which the writer summarily expresses opinions on subjects of general interest. The doctrines of Christianity had not yet emerged

from the foundations of Christianity. If anyone had mentioned to one of Paul's Ephesian followers that Jesus was the son of a Virgin and that Mary herself was immaculately conceived, he would have been very surprised to hear it. So would Paul, who would probably have accused his informant of having been to too many services at the Temple of Diana, or of having listened over often to tales told by *theologi*. The doctrine of the Infallibility of the Pope had not yet been invented. There was no Pope about whom to invent it. 'It is, of course,' Dr. Temple says in *The Church and its Teaching To-day*, 'a familiar fact that when the physical presence of our Lord was withdrawn at the time of the Ascension, what remained in the world as the fruit of His sojourn here was not an organised society with constitution and rules; nor was it a book which He had written for the guidance of His disciples; but it was a group of disciples united to one another by their common allegiance to Him. It was a living fellowship. And that is not without connection with the whole nature of the work that He himself had come to do.'

The contrast between this small meeting of obscure people in some hole and corner of Ephesus, and any service that was held in the Temple of Diana a mile away, must have been tremendous. She had a cohort of eunuch priests, unwedded priestesses and semi-pious hangers-on of the sort that are seen in and around a cathedral to-day; such as the reduced gentlewomen who sell scapulars, church furniture and religious symbols; all, as it were, *ex-officio* vergers and minor canons. There were *theologi* who lived by telling tales about the goddess and expounding religious legends; *hymnodi* or professional hymn-writers who would promptly turn out an anthem for any purpose on strictly cash terms; and *hieroi* who did chores about the Temple and probably earned a few pence as guides. 'These columns was presented by the late King Croesus of Lydia, an' 'ere be'ind the statue of the Goddess 'erself — may our prayers be 'eard by 'er — you 'ave a statue that was made in 'er honour by the celebrated Athenian sculpture, Prax-ittels. Over 'ere on the left! . . .'

Simple pietists were unscrupulously exploited by priests and hangers-on, and induced to make expensive presents to the Temple or to pay for hymns. Occasionally there were orgiastic

outbursts among the worshippers and the general body of spongiers, some of them fugitives from justice who had taken sanctuary in the Temple. So numerous and expensive were the offerings made by the pilgrims that the Temple became a very richly-appointed museum. Its custodians were able to buy, or were given, large tracts of land. They owned the fishing rights of the Selinusian lakes and other large revenues. One source of income alone, the power to give sanctuary to criminals, must have brought the priests great sums of money. There was a continual and immense traffic at the Temple, where priests in rich robes waxed fat, like Jeshurun, and probably kicked. Who that saw the throngs ascending and descending the fourteen steps that led to the great cypress doors of the Temple could have dreamt of a day when all that glory would have departed and there would be left only the flooded foundations of one of the world's wonders, or that the little band of insignificant persons who were led by a small, fiery-tongued, mean-looking Jew, named Paul, would breed great multitudes of Christians to inhabit the continents of the earth and raise temples grander than Diana's?

Paul preached in the synagogue for three months, and, as usual, caused a schism so deep that he had to leave it and conduct his meetings in the 'school of one Tyrannus', a Greek teacher. 'And this continued by the space of two years,' during which the Apostle's authority steadily increased, as a result, chiefly, of curative powers which he is said to have possessed. His renown was so great that a number of necromancers solemnly burnt their most valuable books, the cost of which amounted to 'fifty thousand pieces of silver' before a crowd in a public place. It was not until the end of this lengthy stay in Ephesus that the silversmiths, who made a very handsome living out of the manufacture and sale of statues of Artemis, began to complain. Their trade was obviously suffering from the effect of Paul's extensive propaganda. We must assume that this effect was extensive for two reasons: one, that a silversmith of the city, sufficiently eminent to be able to employ many craftsmen, thought it necessary to call a conference of these craftsmen and their workmen to consider the danger which threatened their livelihood; and the other, that Demetrius himself reminded the conference of what, he said,

they were already only too well informed, namely, 'that not alone at Ephesus, but almost through all Asia,' by which he meant Asia Minor, 'this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth'. Demetrius, skilful in the wiles of demagogery, appealed both to their cupidity and their religion.

It was this inflammatory speech which caused the riot which instantly ensued. 'And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

'And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.'

When the news of what had happened to Gaius and Aristarchus reached the Apostle, he was so disturbed and anxious that he tried to follow them into the theatre, and was only prevented from doing so by the urgent entreaties of his friends. If he had not been restrained, his appearance in the theatre would probably have incensed the furious silversmiths to such an extent that they might have beaten him and his Macedonian followers to death. Had that fate befallen him, the Christian religion would almost certainly have lapsed into an obscure Palestinian sect and have died out.

Luke's account, in *The Acts of the Apostles*, of this riot is the sort of report that an ill-informed reporter might make of a dangerous public brawl before he had had time to verify his statements. He does not say one word about the treatment of Gaius and Aristarchus, whose capture and appearance in the theatre is described in a single verse, unless, as I shall shortly suggest, verse 37 refers to them; but he devotes two verses to the story of Alexander, a Jew, who seems to have feared that a pogrom might ensue to the riot and to have attempted to clear the orthodox Jews of all complicity in Paul's propaganda. When the crowd discovered that Alexander was a Jew, it would not

listen to his disclaimers, but cried out 'about the space of two hours . . . Great is Diana of the Ephesians'.

The confusion in the city was so great that the Town Clerk was summoned to quell the riot. How he succeeded in appeasing the mob is not stated. He may have done something equivalent to reading the Riot Act. But at all events, he quelled the crowd, and he acted very reasonably towards Paul's followers. He told the rioters, in effect, that if their faith in Diana were firmer, they would not fear for their religion. The frantic way in which they had behaved was enough to make any person imagine them so uncertain of their religion that they were ready to believe that any sort of adverse criticism or attempt to establish a rival religion must imperil Diana. But why should they have such a flabby faith as that? Had not the image which stood in the Temple fallen down from Jupiter? Did not all men know that this was true and, therefore, could not be spoken against? Very well, then, that being so, ought they not 'to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly'? 'Really really,' one can almost hear that wise Town Clerk, one of the wisest in the whole of municipal history, remarking, 'I am surprised that people professing to believe in Diana should be so prompt to think she can be lightly overthrown. What is all this row about? You have rushed harmless Macedonians into the theatre on the flimsiest charge. They are "neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess". And why have you rushed them here to be exposed to wild beasts? Because of something Demetrius, the silversmith, and his fellow-craftsmen have said! But if Demetrius has any charge to make against these two foreigners, Aristarchus and Gaius, let him make it in the proper place. "The law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another." It is not your business to take the law into your own hands. If there is anything to be said against any man, "it shall be determined in a lawful assembly". And let me tell you this before I stop. To-day's uproar has caused a deal of damage and danger in the town, and I tell you flat there'll be the deuce to pay unless you go home and behave like sensible people! . . .'

That speech settled the riot. The Town Clerk dismissed the frightened crowd, now thoroughly submissive, and everybody went away in a state of perturbation. Paul himself thought it

advisable to clear out of Ephesus. He went to Macedonia and then into Greece, where he stayed for three months. That, summarily, is the story of Paul's long stay in Ephesus — we know that it lasted two years and three months, and it may have lasted almost three years — and there is nothing in Luke's account of it to warrant the belief that Paul was imprisoned there at all or that the imprisonment, if it occurred, was caused by Jews. There is no warrant even for the belief that it was due to Demetrius. It is incredible that Luke should not have mentioned the imprisonment or that Paul himself should not have referred to it in clear language. Dr. Duncan, obviously in difficulty, as he candidly confesses, because of Luke's omission to mention any imprisonment in Ephesus, although he, even more than Paul himself, was likely to have mentioned it, had it occurred, ingeniously, but not, I think, convincingly, suggests that Luke's account of Paul's career in *The Acts* was of the nature of a barrister's brief, prepared for Paul's defence in Rome, and that owing to the disfavour into which Marcus Junius Silanus, the pro-consul at Ephesus, had fallen with Agrippina and her son Nero, Luke decided that it would not be wise or safe to call the pro-consul's testimony in Paul's behalf; and as he could not refer to the Ephesian imprisonment without mentioning the kindness Silanus had shown the Apostle, he diplomatically left out all reference to it, though why he should have mentioned the riot and not the imprisonment, is hard to understand.

The evidence on which the belief in Paul's Ephesian imprisonment is based is not, it seems to me, strong enough to bear the belief. Dr. Anderson Scott says 'it is plain, however, from passages in the Epistles . . . that either in connexion with the riot or otherwise Paul had undergone at Ephesus personal suffering, including probably imprisonment and danger of death, of which Luke tells us nothing. He had passed through one experience of such a kind that he could only compare it to "fighting with beasts" in the arena'. The fact that Luke does *not* refer to these extraordinary sufferings is in itself a hard obstacle in the way of those who seek to show that the Ephesians were not, as I have suggested, exceptionally tolerant for their times to Paul and his followers, but apart from that obstacle, the passages in the Epistles which are cited by Dr. Anderson

Scott seem to be either *not* to prove his argument or to be so vague that they might prove anything.

The first passage cited is to be found in I Corinthians xv. 32. In it Paul says, 'If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die.' Is not the Apostle here referring, not to a physical fact, but to a state of mind? What would be the good of conquering doubts and sinful desires so strong that they might be compared to a struggle with wild beasts in the theatre at Ephesus, where two of his travelling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, had almost been exposed, if there were no resurrection of the dead? Why bother to overcome these desires, why attempt to resolve these doubts, if the grave is the end of us? The struggle which a believer might have with his own flesh or with his fears could most fitly be expressed in the image of a man struggling with lions in an arena. To suggest that this passage can be interpreted to mean that Paul actually was exposed to wild beasts at Ephesus or that he was in grave danger of being exposed to them, seems to me to misunderstand the language of hyperbole and to treat an image or a colloquialism as if it were a statement of fact. In any event, Paul, as a Roman citizen, was surely exempt from execution by death in the arena?

The second passage occurs in Ephesians vi. 20: 'For which I am an ambassador in bonds.' It does not appear to me to mean that he was, at the moment of writing, actually in chains or in gaol, but merely to be a variation of a reference to himself which Paul was fond of making. He called himself 'the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles' and 'the prisoner of the Lord' when he wrote to the Ephesians, and 'a prisoner of Jesus Christ' when he wrote, in his old age, the lovely little epistle to Philemon. In this letter he speaks of the slave, Onesimus as 'my son . . . whom I have begotten in my bonds', a statement which is obviously an account of the slave's conversion in prison and, therefore, indicative of Paul's own imprisonment, and begs Philemon to salute 'Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ'; but before we can regard the reference to Onesimus as a proof of imprisonment in Ephesus, we must first get rid of the belief that Onesimus met Paul in a prison in Rome. Dr. Duncan ingeniously meets that objection, but does not, in my judgment,

remove it. The third passage, 'For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired of life . . . ' (2 Corinthians 1. 8) refers, I believe, to a state of mind, a period of acute spiritual strain and depression, such as Paul must often have suffered. Dr. L. B. Radford, formerly the Bishop of Goulburn, Australia, has summarised the arguments for and against the probability that Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus in his Introduction to his volume of *The Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon* in the Westminster Commentaries. He seems to side with those who doubt if Paul was ever imprisoned there. Dr. Duncan's theory, which involves him in the belief that four of Paul's Epistles, generically known as the Imprisonment Epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians and to Philemon, were written, not from Rome, but from a prison in Ephesus, may not seem important, even if it be true, to the generality of people, but it has immense significance to the historian and to the theologian, especially in its relation to the state of mind of the Apostle when he wrote his epistles.

XLIII

Sitting on the tumbled stones outside the theatre in which the turmoil happened, I found myself unusually aware of Paul. The narrow street in which I sat was not the main street of Ephesus. If it was no wider in Paul's time than it is now, chariots could not have been driven along it, and it could have been used only by pedestrians and, perhaps, by asses and camels. The main street, the Via Arcadia, Sir William Ramsay says, 'ran from the inner harbour right up to the base of Pion:

'The visitor to Ephesus, after landing at the harbour, would traverse this long straight street, edged by porticoes, with a series of magnificent buildings on either hand, until he reached the left front of the Grand Theatre and the beginning of the steep ascent of Pion. The street, as it has been disclosed by the Austrian excavations, is the result of a late reconstruction and bears the name of the Emperor Arcadius, A.D. 395-408; but the reconstruction was only partial, and there can be little doubt that the general plan of the city in this quarter dates

from the foundations about 287 B.C., and that this great street is the one mentioned in the Bezan text of Acts xix. 28.¹

Time has greatly changed Ephesus. About a thousand years before the birth of Christ, the waters of the Gulf of Ephesus ran along the valley to Ayasalouk, covering part of the land now crossed by the railway, but they are now eight miles away. The site of the Temple of Diana was almost as close to the sea as the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon is to the river. The water receded twice, and perhaps three times; first, about 300 B.C., to a point roughly corresponding with the end of the broad street leading from the Great Theatre to what was then the Harbour; that is to say, a short walking distance from the foot of Mount Prion. This was the coastline in Paul's time, although it was already beginning to recede for the second time. This second recession is thought to have halted about A.D. 100-200, near the foot of the hill, Astyages, on which stands St. Paul's Prison; but it did not remain there, dropping back to its present position and taking the Gulf of Ephesus off the map. What was once a deep waterway, covered with shipping and running up to a busy town, is now a marsh covered with reed whose susurration, when the wind blows across them, rises to the hill-tops, Sir William says, in 'a strange vast volume of sound'.

Conscious of the Apostle, I turned to look down the great street, the Via Arcadia, along which Aristarchus and Gaius had been hurried, along which Paul himself, soon after their illegal arrest, came hurrying after them. Four centuries later another row broke out in that street, when Christian fathers in God, conferring in the Church of the Councils, condemned, violently and vehemently, Nestorius for heresy and had him deposed. Nearly twenty hundred years have passed since these strifes broke out in that orgulous street, one that must have seemed to those by whom it was frequented, eternal as the hills around it, and here it is to-day, silent and deserted, a malarial swamp and a peepshow for tourists. If I could summon the dead from their graves and invite them to look around them in Ephesus, how would they feel about themselves and about us? Would they smile wryly and return to their tombs sorry that

¹ *The Letters to the Seven Churches*, page 224. I have retained Ramsay's spelling of 'Prion' in my quotations from him.

they had been resurrected? What would the Town Clerk say, could he see Ephesus now, and how would Demetrius feel as he searched in vain for a sign of the shop in which he sold his silver statues of Diana? What would any of them say if they were led down the road to Ayasalouk to see the flooded foundations of the Temple? Is that all that is left of *her*? . . . And I wondered if we too are destined to come to this. Shall there be nothing left of us but a pile of broken pillars among which archaeologists poke? Will the worship of Jesus pass as effectually away as the worship of the many-breasted Artemis? Will tourists come to London, as we went to Ephesus, and find the foundations of St. Paul's full of water, as we found the Temple of Diana? Will there be storks? I have scarcely written the question when I see it answered in the Press. There may be storks, for some of our contemporaries, preparing, perhaps, for the day of desolation, are attempting to settle them in Sussex! . . .

We returned to Ayasalouk in the early evening, and sat outside a café in front of the ruined aqueduct to wait for the train. To pay for our seats, we bought, but I did not drink, the blackguardly liquid which the Turks call coffee, as foul a concoction as any man ever drank, and looked at the storks making love on their nests. At intervals, a bird would rise from its pillar and, tucking its long red legs under its tail, fly towards the valley of the Cayster from which, presently, it would return with, I hoped, a frog in its throat, though heaven knows I wish frogs no harm, only that I like storks better. A young Negro with sorrowful eyes appealed to me to let him polish my shoes, and although they did not need to be polished, I let him have his way. The villagers gathered round the café, slouching, unsmiling people, and some of them carried those odd rosaries one sees in the Near East, rosaries that are used, not for religious purposes, but to pass the time. A Turk rolls beads through his fingers as a groom chews a straw, or a bored boy whittles a stick, or a nervous person drums on the table. Goats ran about. The place was dead. The glory of Diana had departed! . . .

We returned to Smyrna as the dusk began to descend. Olive-trees, grey in the sunlight, became greyer in the dark. The noise of birds dwindled to tired cheeping and died away. Looking out of the carriage window, I saw a camel motionless

on a mound. He stood still as a carved creature, immovably fixed: a thing that bore burdens yesterday and to-day, and would bear burdens again to-morrow. A terrible patience expressed itself in that motionless beast: the patience that has no hope. It is common to remark on the supercilious look observable on every camel's face, but when I saw these burdened beasts go by, their soft hoofs padding in the dirt, I thought them unbearably pathetic, not because they were brutally used, for I saw no brutality offered to any animal during the whole of my journey to Jerusalem. It is not of cruelty that I am thinking when I say that the camel, like its companion, the burdened ass, seemed to me unbearably pathetic. My thought is only of their hopeless look, a look that was reflected in the eyes of their owners. The camel and the ass, uncomplainingly carrying loads that appeared to Westerners too heavy because we failed to see how carefully the loads were distributed and balanced, symbolise the spiritless endurance of their masters. I turned to a man who lives in Smyrna and asked him what sort of a living a farmer earns in Asia Minor. 'He's lucky if he makes ten shillings a week,' was the reply I received. Out of annual earnings of twenty-six to thirty pounds, the farmer must pay three or four pounds in taxes. If he is industrious and enterprising he penalises himself, for the state takes more and more money from him as he becomes better off. It is foolish to be energetic in Asia Minor. A wise farmer cultivates his land only enough to provide him and his family with sufficient food and a little cash. Enterprising men either emigrate or, if emigration is difficult or impossible, lapse into the dull, inefficient clawing at the earth which passes for farming in Turkey. The lesson is one we have been taught many times, but still we do not learn it. The Irish farmer was penalised by raised rents when he improved his farm, so he threw it out of cultivation as the date on which his lease was to expire approached. Governments everywhere dissuade enterprising and able and industrious people from using all their efforts by putting heavier and more heavy taxes on them as their income rises. The rate of ability declines, and the community suffers. As I listened to my neighbour in the train to Smyrna, I said to myself, Here is a reproof to us in the West who, bitten by this craze for officials and dictating taxers, are preparing

to make no more effort, but to relax upon the state and let it keep us. The stork, an Arab in Southern Palestine was to tell me, is a good bird and beloved by everybody because it eats the snakes and locusts; and I thought, as I heard him speak, how greatly we need storks in Europe to-day! . . .

Perhaps the camel has its own comfort, and dreams of a heaven in which unburdened beasts may tread on soft earth and browse on lush green grass. Rupert Brooke, remembering some of the sayings of Xenophanes,¹ wrote a poem, entitled *Heaven*, in which he portrayed a fishy paradise:

'Fish (fly-replete, in depth of June,
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,
Each secret fishy hope or fear.
Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond;
But is there anything Beyond?
This life cannot be All, they swear,
For how unpleasant if it were!
One may not doubt that, somehow, Good
Shall come of Water and of Mud;
And, sure, the reverent eye must see
A Purpose in Liquidity.
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,
The future is not Wholly Dry.
Mud unto Mud! – Death eddies near –
Not here the appointed End, not here!
But somewhere, beyond Space and Time,
Is wetter water, slimier slime!
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One
Who swam ere rivers were begun,
Immense, of fishy form and mind,
Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;
And under that Almighty Fin,
The littlest fish may enter in.
Oh! never fly conceals a hook
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,
But more than mundane weeds are there,
And mud, celestially fair;

¹ Three fragments from Xenophanes, 5, 6, and 6a, which may be treated as one statement: 'But mortals think that the gods are born as they are, and have perception like theirs, and voice and form. Yes, and if oxen or lions had hands, and could paint with their hands and produce works of art as men do, horses would paint the forms of the gods like horses, and oxen like oxen. Each would represent them with bodies according to the form of each. So the Ethiopians make their gods black and snub-nosed; the Thracians give theirs red hair and blue eyes.'

Fat caterpillars drift around,
And Paradisal grubs are found;
Unfading moths, immortal flies,
And the worm that never dies.
And in that Heaven of all their wish,
There shall be no more land, say fish.'

An aqueous infinity seems as good as any.

That night Mr. and Mrs. Morton left us at Smyrna, and I saw them go with deep regret, for they had grown into my affection, and some anxiety, for their journey might be dangerous. Their train left for Konya at midnight, and as I lay in my comfortable cabin, I thought of them, tired and perhaps sleepless, in their uncomfortable carriage, and I wished that Paul had visited places closer to the conveniences of civilised people.

XLIV

The *Laetitia* went on to Cyprus, passing on the way the rocky island of Patmos, where, according to repute, St. John the Evangelist wrote the *Apocalypse* or *Book of Revelation* in a grotto or cave, to which he had been banished under Domitian, Jerome says, in A.D. 95, and where he remained about two years, at the end of which time, Domitian having been assassinated, he was released under the rule of Nerva. There has been a vast amount of dispute about this curious work, which has been held, but not with sufficient authority, to be the work of the Fourth Gospeller, mainly because of certain similarities of expression which, however, may have been phrases of the time and such as contemporary writers might use without ever having read each other. The Fourth Gospel is thought to have been written at Ephesus in A.D. 97, and to have been circulated only among a small group of Ephesian Christians until, about 100-120, it was published by the Ephesian Church. The *Apocalypse* or *Book of Revelation* is generally believed to have been written by John the presbyter or evangelist who died in Ephesus about the year A.D. 100. But here we are in the domain of speculation where there is no rest for the mind. He is thought, by Sir William Ramsay, to have spent a long time in Patmos, undergoing a heavy sentence to lifelong exile and hard labour because of some grave offence against the government,

the offence, not of being a Christian, which was serious enough to merit death, but of an attempt at insurrection. The presbyter apparently raised his voice against the revocation of an imperial decree forbidding extensive growth of vines. If this decree were revoked, he said, luxuries would be produced where necessities were required, and the vices of the rich, especially drunkenness, would be encouraged while poor men starved for want of food. It was for this offence that he was sent to Patmos, and very lucky he was not to have been crucified. One might pardonably deduce from Ramsay's references to him that the punishment he suffered in Patmos affected his mind, at all events, temporarily, and that his *Apocalypse* is the product of a disordered brain. That, however, is not the deduction Ramsay wishes his readers to make. The *Revelation* has had a hard job to survive in the Christian religion. Both Luther and Erasmus were dubious about its value. But 'its splendid faith and unconquerable hope' have prevented its dismissal from the Bible.

As we steamed past the island, I saw, on the ridge of a high hill, what seemed at first to be a great pile of snow, but which turned out to be a group of dazzlingly white houses clustered round a white monastery: St. John's. While I was looking at them a lady came to me and said, 'Is there anything remarkable about this island?' I told her that St. John the Divine was supposed to have written the *Book of Revelation* there, and that he mentions his stay in the first chapter of the *Book*. 'Oh!' she exclaimed, 'and is there anything to see?' 'Well, people show you a cave in which he is said to have written the *Book*.' My statement seemed to shock her. 'Oh, I shouldn't think he'd have written it in *a cave*,' she said, making me wonder what there was that was disreputable about grottoes. I do not imagine that St. John, who 'heard a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last,' bothered much about the kind of place in which he wrote. 'What thou seest,' the voice said, 'write in a book.' And he wrote! . . .

That afternoon I found Mrs. Burnett Smith (Annie S. Swan) in distress. She had picked up in a lounge a copy of the *Scotsman* in which there was an account of the sudden death of a friend who had died in her house. This friend had been

staying with Miss Burnett Smith, keeping her company, and this was the first news Mrs. Burnett Smith had received of the death. Her daughter, not wishing to spoil her holiday, had kept the news from her. I suppose the chances against her seeing that copy of the *Scotsman* were millions to one, yet it was the copy she picked up that afternoon. We talked for a little while, taking our tea together, and I told her my story, of the lady who despised grottoes and some other stories that I had either heard or made up, and persuaded her to tell me my fortune again.

Two days after we had sailed from Smyrna, we landed at Cyprus, a pretty island, full of orange groves, and very much in the political eye because of the Italo-Abyssinian situation and the theory, held mostly by civilians, that Malta is no longer a suitable base for the British Navy. The naval officers with whom I have discussed the matter seem not to share that belief. Malta is not quite the base it was, but it is base enough for us to keep. We shall neither abandon it nor give it away. The Maltese, from all I could learn, have no wish to be governed by Mussolini. We dropped anchor in Famagusta Bay, and I went ashore with Prince Chumbot of Siam and his sisters, the Princesses Pisitha and Suddhawong, with whom I shared a carriage to drive inland. Unluckily the driver who spoke no English, had a friend on the box of his carriage, and this man, a vain, moustache-twisting fellow, insisted on guiding us against our will. I dislike guides. They are always telling one things. If they would content themselves with leading people to places, maintaining a Trappist silence, except when spoken to, they would be endurable; but that is the last thing they dream of doing, and they madden me with their learnt 'bits' about ancient places.

This Cypriot was full of himself and his six or seven English sentences. I have never seen a man twirl his moustache so persistently as he did. I thought, indeed, I hoped, he would twirl it off his face. That would have been fun. I should have laughed myself sore if suddenly the man's moustache had come off in his hand! . . . His affectation of high spirits afflicted me. Such heartiness, and so early in the morning! . . . He begged to be allowed to remain on the box since the driver 'no speak no English, not good!' and was certain, therefore, to feel

embarrassed if by any chance we should ask him a question or give him a direction he could not understand; and so, on the strict understanding that we did not wish to be guided, we weakly allowed him to remain. But there is no subduing guides. The man *would* tell us things. As we drove in the country round Famagusta, yielding to the sunshine and the smell of orange blossom, he disturbed us with his distressing information. We looked at a tank in an orange grove. 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'water! Very nice water!' Little did he know how narrowly he escaped being flung into it. We saw a horse in a paddock. 'Ah,' he said, 'a horse! Very nice horse!' Does this ass, I said to myself, suppose that I cannot recognise a horse when I see one? We tried to leave him behind us when we entered an orange grove, but he followed us, dribbling with information. He saw some potatoes peeled on a plate, and almost fell into an ecstasy. 'Ah, potatoes!' he cried. 'Very nice potatoes!' God, said to myself, if this man says another word I'll hit him; and lest he should, and I might commit an assault, I fled him through the grove, shamelessly leaving my friends at his mercy and keeping myself out of earshot only by dint of great effort and agility. But I lost control of my temper when, in Famagusta, he pointed to the Post Office and said, 'Ah, post office! Very nice post office!' He might have been Sir Christopher Wren remarking on St. Paul's Cathedral. I cried out that I could bear him no longer and, stopping the carriage, dismissed the driver who had allowed him to burden us with his intolerable talk. But, fool that I am, I gave the garrulous guide money, excusing myself for my weakness by saying that perhaps he had a wife and children who must suffer tortures from his interminable tongue. I horrified myself by imagining him returning to his home at night and discharging masses of information at his family. 'Here on the right we have the public abattoir! Over there on the left you may see the Rate Collector's Office! . . .' The Cypriots, I was told, and the fact was confirmed for me when, at dinner in London a few weeks later, I sat next to Sir Ronald Storrs, who had been Governor of the Island, and Governor, too, of Jerusalem, think we have done less for their island than we might. It ought to be developed, they say, as a tourist resort. That's as may be. The island is enchanting, but if development means the infliction

on mankind of a plague of chattering guides, then let it remain undeveloped, let it, indeed, relapse into obscurity.

We came out of Famagusta Harbour and steamed towards Beyrout, a city whose name is spelt in such a variety of ways that even a printer's error may be right, and here I disembarked to begin the last stage of my journey. I was bound for Jerusalem, having first been warned not to drink any water or eat uncooked salad or fruit which could not be peeled.

XLV

The morning was wet when we reached Beyrout, and the sea terribly rough, so our landing was delayed; but we got ashore safely and piled into comfortable cars driven by Arabs. Here we waited a long time while managers and guides and drivers, all wearing the fez, which is forbidden in Turkey, but is almost ostentatiously worn by Moslems and Christian Arabs in Palestine and Syria, walked about with airs of importance and busy-ness and shouted at each other a great deal. An Arab would walk very quickly and importantly up to another Arab and shout at him some sentences which were received with calm and almost indifference, and then walk away as quickly but not so importantly as he had come. In Beyrout, as elsewhere on the shores of the Mediterranean, we were beset with youths selling tourists' rubbish; and one of them, a charming, cheeky lad with smiling eyes, endeavoured to make me buy the most appalling junk on which I have ever clapped my eyes. When I said, 'No, I don't want it!' with a qualm lest I should be keeping a potential scholar short of money for his studies, he replied, 'Why?' to which the only answer seemed to be, 'Because!' but I did not make it. I had it on my conscience all the way to Baalbec that I had kept a stiff upper lip and refused to let myself be beguiled into buying ghastly rubbish by that pleasant, smiling boy. There are times, indeed, when a man should abandon his principles, taking temporarily to drink if he be a teetotaller, and becoming indiscriminately charitable if he be a member of the Charity Organisation Society. Sometimes, even now, when I recall that morning in Beyrout, I reproach myself for not having bought the boy's rubbish. After all, I could have thrown it away, though I should hate to have

defiled the Lebanon Mountains with it, or I could have given it to one of those tourists to whom this awful stuff is pleasing, or I could have dropped it into the Dead Sea. Well, it is too late now, but if I return to Beyrouth, it will be because my conscience will not leave me alone, but urges me without cease or compunction to go back to Beyrouth and buy something, however dull and dreadful, from that saucy boy who smiled so pleasantly.

I confess with shame that I had never heard of Baalbec, a city whose name is as variously spelt as Beyrouth's, until I was taken there; though I ought to have remembered the reference to it in Robert Bridges's poem, *The Testament of Beauty*, where he describes the way in which Time and the Muse strip unhappiness away from ancient tales and leave only the nobility that is in the heart of man:

'But these and all old tales of far-off things, bygones
of long-ago whereof memory still holdeth shape,
Time and the Muse have purged of their unhappiness;
with their bright broken beauty they pervade the abyss,
peopling the Solitude with gorgeous presences:
as those bare lofty columns, time-whiten'd relics
of Atlanteän adoration, upstanding lone
in Baalbec or Palmyra, proudly affront the waste
and with rich thought atone the melancholy of doom.'

When I published my ignorance in the *Observer*, my friend, Lieut.-Col. Sydney Baddeley wrote to remind me that there is an enormous picture, entitled *Halting of a Caravan at Baalbec*, by David Roberts in the Garrick Club. It is 81 inches by 141, almost covering a wall, and I must have seen it hundreds of times, yet I, who pride myself on my observation, had not realised, or had forgotten, that it is a picture of the ruins of Baalbec.

The rain ceased to fall as we drove out of Beyrouth, a smart-looking town, unmistakably controlled by Frenchmen, and ascended a long, twisting, well-laid road that led to the Lebanon Mountains. I turned to the chauffeur by my side, an Arab and a very capable driver, who had the unfortunate habit of clearing his throat and spitting very vehemently every few minutes, and remarked on the fine state of the roads. The French, I thought, had done this engineering job exceedingly

well, and I was prepared to find, when we left Syria and entered Palestine, that the roads we had laid were less well made. 'They're better,' said the Arab, and I am proud to say that, good though the French roads in Syria were, the British roads in Palestine *were* better. (And here I must say, for I shall have no occasion to say it elsewhere in this book, that on my return I went into a barber's shop in the Gare de Lyon in Paris to be shaved and, making poor conversation in French, remarked that I had just returned from Syria where the roads were exceedingly fine. 'I helped to make them,' said the barber.)

We drove along a lovely road that became lovelier as we rose up the mountains until we were 5,500 feet above the sea, and then, alas, a mist enveloped us and hid the valleys from our view. We had anticipated a magnificent sight of Mount Hermon from the summit of this road, but it was denied us. Until we ran into the mist, however, our journey had been happy, through very beautiful country. The road was lined on either side with wild-flowers, and I was astonished to see that the almond blossom had only broken, for it was almost over with us when I left Devon. We passed orchards of apricots and green hills covered with juniper, and bright brown mountains with snow on their heads and vivid purple and green fields at their feet. I sat back in my seat, unwilling to say anything lest I should miss some loveliness while I spoke. As we came out of the mist the car in front of ours skidded terribly, making a complete circle, and my heart went into my mouth, for I thought it would go over the edge of the road and fall down a long slope. Our driver jammed on his brakes and brought us to a standstill within a yard or two of the skidding car, which had now ceased to whirl round. We had narrowly escaped a serious accident, and were heaving sighs of relief when a private car, containing some Syrians, one of whom was a heavily-veiled woman, came pelting up the misty road, winding in and out of the cars, and ran slap into our back, causing Mrs. Rowntree and Mrs. Kitching to be thrown violently forward and then violently back. However, we emerged from this mishap without other injury than bruises and headaches to the ladies, who had been shocked by the collision. I felt extremely frightened, for I had no wish to die in a mist on a mountain, but when I saw how calmly Mr. Rowntree, whose

age was seventy-five, took the whole incident, I pretended a jauntiness I did not feel and behaved as if no ride without an accident could satisfy me. The bumper of our car was badly bent and broken, and the Syrian car, I think and hope, was severely damaged. It seemed odd to me that the lady should still retain her ridiculous veil and yet ride in a motor-car; but women are queer about religion and are seldom happy until they have reduced it to superstition. Does she suppose the Almighty God, who made myriads of worlds, bothers his head about her bit of tulle? . . .

We resumed our journey, shaken but undaunted, and came down a superbly cambered road that twisted and turned in a dazzling manner until we reached the plains; and then, our minds disengaged of fears that at any moment we might plunge down a precipice, we sat back in our seats and, when a chance occurred, gazed on the snowy head of Mount Hermon: that lovely hill which may be seen for miles. It prevails over Palestine and Syria, the most compelling mountain I have ever seen, and it excited emotion in me that I cannot explain. No one who has seen the mountains of Skye wrapped in sunlit clouds can ever forget their appearance of insubstantial loveliness. The mountains of Mourne in Ulster are indescribably beautiful. I shall remember as long as I live the afterglow of the sunset on Swiss mountains, and the sense of horror I had when suddenly the rosy light faded and the snow lost its look of warmth and became cold and dark. I felt that the mountain had dropped down dead! . . . I remember beautiful mountains in America, high and low, and dark, austere, forbidding mountains in Norway that must have entered Ibsen's soul and darkened it. There are mountains in Southern Spain that look like iron gates firmly bolted against all intruders, and Mont Blanc is a white eagle guarding Italy, France and Switzerland against surprise. All these mountains subdue the imagination and inspire awe, but none of them compels attention as Hermon does. It seemed to be everywhere. The young Jesus, by whatever road he left Nazareth, always saw it, and more than any other mountain nearer to Nazareth, even Mount Tabor, it must have caught and held his eyes. It looked cool and lovely as it rose with ease and assurance from the sunburnt Syrian desert and surveyed the country for many miles around.

Oscar Wilde, during that amazing lecture tour he made in America in 1882, told a reporter in Denver that 'the only scenery which inspires utterance is that which man feels himself master of. The mountains of California are so gigantic that they are not favourable to art or poetry. There are good poets in England, but none in Switzerland. There the mountains are too high. Art cannot add to nature.' But Wilde's knowledge of Swiss poets cannot have been extensive in 1882, when he was twenty-seven, and this is a little of the nonsense he talked on that tour, though he talked much less nonsense than is supposed. Hermon must have stimulated many poets. As I gazed on the beautiful landscape, and again as I gazed on it the following day while driving to Damascus, I remembered my astonishment when my friend, Mrs. Edward Thompson, the American wife of the English poet, who was born in Syria, told me that she dreamt of a day when she might return to the land in which she was born. How, I had wondered, could anyone who might live in England, wish to live in Syria? But when I saw Syria her wish no longer seemed absurd. It is a most beautiful country. As we drove along a level road, with horse and camel tracks on either side, we looked across wide, hedgeless plains and saw Syrian farmers turning the earth with ploughs such as Abraham may have used: each, a long shaft of wood, with a short spike at its end, which oxen pulled through the stony soil.

We became very conscious of the shuttlecocking of ages as we approached Baalbec; for here were we, highly sophisticated Europeans, lolling like Roman Emperors in comfortable cars, driven by Arabs whose claim to be civilised is hard to sustain, and there by the side of the road, was a team of camels, led by an ass with a tinkling bell, and over there, in the middle distance, not lifting his eyes from his furrow to look at us, was a ploughman who seemed unaware of the progress mankind has made in the last thousand years. There he was, poor ignorant yokel, turning the earth with a plough that any lad in his first term at an agricultural college would have scrapped without hesitation, turning his back on the Mechanical Age which swept magnificently past him!

A mile or two outside Baalbec we passed an Arab tomb, standing solitarily by the roadside: a queer contraption that

looked more like a 'folly' than a tomb. Large slabs of stone rested on six pillars, one of which, reeling a little, made the whole tomb seem slightly drunk. I suspect that some eccentric fellow who could not associate with his neighbours even in death had put his relations to the great trouble and expense of making a special grave for him away from everybody, in the hope, perhaps, that on the last day the Almighty would take particular notice of him. This fellow had puffed himself up with the pride of an elaborate tomb outside the town, and I dare say he had comforted himself many times, as he lay dying — the sort of man, I feel certain, whose death would have been far, far too lingering — with the reflection that troops of his relations, especially the women, would blister their heels as they wailed from Baalbec to his tomb and back again. I saw no reason why this monument, which possesses neither beauty nor, so far as I could discover, history, should not be pushed over. It is absurd that the insignificant corpse it covers should be permitted to withhold any soil from cultivation.

We were in Baalbec by lunch-time and, having a little time to wait, I listened to the talk around me. A lady bitterly complained that we had been carried to Baalbec in cars. Why could we not have put ourselves in tune with the country by riding on camels? Or on donkeys? It was all wrong that we should be driving in motor-cars! All wrong! Was it not? . . . But I did not observe any eagerness on her part the next morning to hire a camel to carry her to Damascus, nor did I notice that she avoided such conveniences of civilisation as were to be found in Baalbec in favour of the more 'natural' ways of relieving oneself that are practised by the Arabs. I am sufficiently sceptical of the value of some features of civilisation not to wish to impose them on other people, but having been born to the benefits of a civilised country, I have no wish to 'go native' and abandon them. In any event, romantic ladies who want to behave in a *hey-nonny-no* manner bore me. That night, as we sat in an ill-lit lounge, unable to read because of the dim light in the electric lamps, I found myself thinking well of civilisation and wishing at that moment that I had more of it.

After an excellent lunch, expertly served, we went to see the ruins of the Roman Temples to Jupiter and Bacchus, which are among the most magnificent and remarkable of all the remains

that are left in the world. Archaeologists, someone said to me, profess to despise them because they are too 'late', but I am not an archaeologist and I can admire remains without stopping to think of my professional interests. Let me not be thought to be sneering at archaeologists when I say that. I respect those who give their minds to the discovery of our origins and are ready to be regarded as fools for mankind's sake, but I am not oblivious of the fact that archaeologists are sometimes very queer fish, and inclined to take their 'periods' too seriously. An archaeologist will go juggling up and down the earth with emotion because he has found a stone or a ridiculous bottle that belongs to his 'period', though it has scarcely any form and no beauty to recommend it, and will sniff with scorn at a monument of unmatchable loveliness. 'Ye-es, very nice, of course, but *ra-ther* late, don't you think?' Bah! Who wants the rubbish and dirt of the world? It is the beauty we seek.

Baalbec was a little, but important, town when the Romans, under Julius Caesar, conquered Syria in 47 B.C., but it was one of the oldest cities in Lebanese Syria. Its name, which means 'Sun Town', was literally translated into Heliopolis at the time of the Macedonian conquest. The Romans did not change the Greek name, and, realising the strategic importance of the town because of its central situation, spent time and money in developing it, and made it a great and busy town. They built the Temples of Jupiter and Bacchus.

But it is a poor place to-day. How much it has shrunk is evident from its population, which when it was Heliopolis, was about 200,000, but it is now about 5,000. If Plymouth were to shrink to the size of Sidmouth, its economic condition would probably be the same as Baalbec's. The religious division of its inhabitants is sharp, but no sharper than the religious division observable in any English village. It has Chiite and Sunite Moslems, Greek Catholics and members of the Greek Orthodox Church, Maronites, Armenians and a group of people who are called Evangelists. That seems a considerable and unnecessary division of belief in a town of five thousand inhabitants, but it is not much more than I can find in the Devonshire town in which I live, where, in addition to Anglicans, we have several sects of Dissenters; such as Congregationalists, Christadelphians, British Israelites, Methodists, Spiritualists, Plymouth Brethren

and Roman Catholics. Baalbec¹ appeared to me no more divided in spirit than Seaton, nor do I see anything shameful in such division, which is a sign of spiritual vigour, and denotes that those who profess a faith have given some thought to it.

Baalbec and the whole of that part of Syria is extraordinarily mixed up with Biblical history. The Arabs assert that Adam lived at Damascus and died at Zebadani. Cain, they say, murdered Abel at Abylena, the name of which commemorates the murder. It will be noted that the first murderer was a vegetarian. It will also be noted that the most violent men in Europe to-day, Hitler and Mussolini, are vegetarians, non-smokers and total abstainers. It seems that a vegetable diet does not pacify those who take it, a fact which makes Paul's slightly contemptuous reference to vegetarianism in Romans xiv. 2, hard to follow. 'For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.' Unless, of course, Paul meant that vehement men are always weak.

Adam's third son, Seth, who was born after Abel was slain, is said to have lived in Nebi-Shit, where his tomb is venerated. Noah is supposed to have lived at Becca and to have died and been buried at Karak-Nouh. His tomb is a hundred feet long for he was a giant. He could stand, the Arabs say, with one foot on Lebanon and the other on Anti-Lebanon, and was so large a man that only one of his legs could be put in the tomb. Where the rest of him was buried is not told in the story. His son, Shem's, grave is at Ham, a town in Anti-Lebanon, about twenty kilometres south of Baalbec. I dare say there is some explanation of the belief that Shem lies in a town called after his brother, Ham, but I do not know what it is. Baalbec itself is supposed by the Arabs to have been built by Cain after he had been cursed for killing Abel. Mr. Alouf informs his readers that 'Estfan Dowaihi, the Maronite patriarch, speaks of Baalbec in the following terms: "Tradition states that the fortress of Baalbec on Mount Lebanon is the most ancient building in the world. Cain, the son of Adam, built it in the year 133 of the creation, during a fit of raving madness. He gave it the name

¹ I have drawn some of my information about Baalbec from a small *History of Baalbec* by one of its inhabitants, Mr. Michel M. Alouf, the Curator of the ruins of Baalbec.

of his son, Henok, and peopled it with giants who were punished for their iniquities by the flood.”

Nimrod is said to have built the Tower of Babel at Baalbec, and the dryness of the Anti-Lebanon desert is attributed to the curse imposed on him for his blasphemy. He was a determined antagonist of the Almighty. He rebelled against God, instituted idolatry, and, when Abraham came to warn him that his sins would bring punishment upon him, flung the patriarch into a furnace from which, however, Abraham emerged unscathed. The spectacle of the unburnt Abraham made Nimrod angrier and, according to the Arabs, he decided to attack the Almighty himself; for which purpose he built the Tower. It collapsed the night after it was finished, and Nimrod thereupon conceived the notion of entering heaven in a car drawn by four enormous birds. The car, after lumbering about the void for a long time, collapsed on Mount Hermon, where the body of the monarch, ‘horribly mutilated’, was found and buried. It was Nimrod, an Arab manuscript records, who rebuilt the fortress of Baalbec after the Flood, employing a group of giants to do it. Zakaria El-Qazwini, an Arabian historian, asserts that Solomon built a castle at Baalbec in honour of Abraham, and that a convent was dedicated there to ‘Saint Elija’ who confounded the priests of the idols here and not, as Christians believe, at Mount Carmel. This Solomonic castle was a wedding gift to Balkis, the queen of Sheba, who, however, is claimed by the Abyssinians as the mother of the illegitimate son of Solomon from whom the Emperors of Ethiopia are descended. In the Arabic Encyclopædia of Bustani, it is stated that Solomon ‘used to lunch at Baalbec and dine in Istakir’ in Afghanistan, a feat which makes flying seem slow, since he had to cross the whole of Syria, Iraq and Persia to perform it.

But these are legends, as the Arabs themselves admit, though no less worthy of belief than some of the legends that Christians uphold as true. Baalbec has been identified with Baal-gad which Joshua took when he defeated a large number of kings and captured ‘all that land, the hills, and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same; Even from the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under Mount Hermon’; but this

identification is falsified by Joshua's statement in the following chapter, xii. 7, in which he begins a list of the thirty-one kings he had slaughtered by placing Baal-gad 'on this side Jordan on the west . . . in the valley of Lebanon'. The suggestion now is that Baalbec is identical with the place called Baalath in the first book of Kings, ix. 18, and that it was one of the halting-towns built by Solomon on the road from Mesopotamia, though that, too, is disputed. But all the disputants confirm the belief that Baalbec is old and venerable, so old that anything may be true of it.

We have to thank the ex-Kaiser for restoring its ruins to order. His ex-Majesty has been subjected to much abuse and derision in his time, and indeed he is a man who was able to give ample employment to mockers, but the people of Baalbec have no cause to complain of him; for it was he who sent a party of archaeologists and engineers to clear away the rubble that had gathered round the ruined Temples and to set them in a suitable relation to their past. These explorers and excavators worked from September 1900, to March 1904, and laid bare the magnificent remains we may now see. Our cavalry, after Allenby had swept through Palestine, across the Plain of Esdraelon, into Syria and up to Damascus, Baalbec and Aleppo, stayed at Baalbec long enough to remove from one of the Temples a pompous and unsightly plaque on which was recorded the fact that the Most High Emperor, Wilhelm II, had honoured the place with a visit on November 10, 1898. I dare say the Temple is better without the plaque, but of all the tablets and memorials of that extraordinary trip to the Holy Land and Syria, this plaque, pompous and unsightly though it may have been, is the only one I would gladly have left in its place. Palestine is full of funny stories of the ex-Emperor, and most of them, I am sure, are apocryphal: untrue in fact, though true in spirit. It is said that one night, while he was staying by the Sea of Galilee, he suddenly appeared to his suite, dripping wet, and declared in a very angry voice his disbelief in the legend that Jesus had walked on the water! . . .

We must, of course, have scapegoats as well as heroes, and if Colonel Lawrence can do for one of the latter, the ex-Emperor can do for one of the former; but it is, I think, as ridiculous to say that the Kaiser made the War as it is to say that Mr. Lloyd

George won it. He cut a poor figure when he ran like a stricken rabbit from the battlefields to the security of a burrow in Doorn, and it is an ironic commentary on the courage of some princes that although he had five sons in the War, not one of them sustained as much as a scratch. But princes are not their own masters, and who are we to say that the failure of the Emperor's sons to shed any of their blood for their Fatherland was their own fault? I have heard of a prince who could scarcely be kept out of the trenches, and was infuriated when his superiors in the field forbade him, on grounds of policy, to run into any danger: a fact fully recognised by the humblest soldier in the line, who, though he might be in abject misery, never reviled his prince for any comfort he might then be enjoying, but said, 'It ain't 'is fault 'e ain't 'ere. 'E'd be 'ere if they'd let 'im!'

Ancient Baalbec, according to Mr. Alouf, was no bigger than it is to-day. Its Roman obesity was unnatural. The swelling subsided when the Romans withdrew. It had a temple to Baal, the Sun God of the East – Astarte was the Goddess – and it was probably chosen as the site of this temple because it was equidistant from all the ancient important cities of Syria. But whether it was or not, the fact that the temple was there, soon made Baalbec one of the most important towns in the country. The place was packed with influential Roman officials, engineers and soldiers, who brought in their train workmen of every sort, as well as merchants and agriculturalists all of whom required a social, as well as a religious, life. There were probably lots of women in Baalbec! . . . It was, I imagine, the equivalent of a 'leave-town' in the late War, and Roman soldiers would go up to Baalbec as British soldiers went up to Paris or Amiens for two or three days. We can imagine a centurion returning to his camp with tales of Baalbec-leave, lurid as any that a subaltern, returning to the line, told of Paris-leave. The remains of a theatre can be seen under the Palmyra Hotel, and there, no doubt, the soldiers saw *The Bing Boys* and the *Chu Chin Chow* of their time.

The town suffered extremes of fortune after the withdrawal of the Romans, but chiefly it suffered those at the wrong end, and steadily dwindled to its present position: a museum city which might have a bare livelihood if it had no ruins to show

to travellers. Its history includes the usual record of slaughter, but in this respect it is no different from a thousand cities, ancient and modern. There are times when we are tempted to wish that our memories could be obliterated and all the records of wrongs burnt or forgotten, but it is useful to remember these old slaughterings since they help us to realise how little a thing our progress is. Baalbec was filled with sorrow many times in the past. Sorrow fills the streets of several cities adjacent to it to-day. Christians suffered the customary persecution under pagans, and pagans have suffered under Christians. 'If we read but of Europe since the birth of Christ,' says Bridges in *The Testament of Beauty*:

"tis still incompetent disorder, all a lecture
of irredeemable shame; the wrongs and sufferings
alike of kings and clowns are a pitiful tale.'

A young actor called Gelasimus suddenly 'found Christ', as Evangelicals say, while acting in the theatre at Baalbec, and — eager like all converts to spread his good news and make more converts, he proclaimed his conversion to the audience, which, outraged by his apostasy, dragged him from the stage and stoned him to death.

But the Christians, under Constantine, the founder, some say, of Christianity, and a good deal of a blackguard, got the better of the pagans. The imperial apostate built a cathedral in Baalbec and ordered the temples to be closed. When, however, Julian apostatised from Christianity, the pagans prevailed again, and there was great slaughtering for a long time. Saint Eudoxia, who was beheaded in the time of the Emperor Trajan, was born, according to one tradition, in Baalbec, but in Samaria according to another. Saint Cyril was a deacon in Baalbec, and converted many pagans to Christianity, but the pagans who remained unmoved by his arguments, seized him after Julian had apostatised, and tore his entrails open and committed it is said, a cannibal act. There was an extraordinary outburst of brutality then; for Christian virgins were dragged into the market-place and, after being outraged, were most cruelly put to death and dismembered. It is believed that Saint Barbara lived and was martyred in Baalbec.

But these slaughterings and martyrdoms are part of the routine

of religion, whether it is called Paganism or Christianity or Bolshevism. We continue to kill. Brave Italians sheltering behind the black Asarkis, advance with scarcely a casualty on ignorant Abyssinians who have been blinded with mustard gas by gallant young airmen, and slay them in great numbers. Spaniards slay Spaniards with savagery no less than that used against Saint Cyril by the pagans of Baalbec; and a Don, with a centuries' old tradition of chivalry behind him, lets Moors loose on Badajos and allows his prisoners of war to be murdered in batches. Blonde Germans brutally beat Jews for being Jews. Russian Communists liquidate Russian aristocrats and peasants impartially. And all the slaughtermen proclaim a noble purpose in themselves, though they have only one unifying passion, their lust for blood. The beast in man dies hard. I shall begin to believe in the progress we are making when I find that the men, or rather the girls, who operate the magnificent machines we worship are superior to the men who till the fields of Syria with primitive ploughs. Is the kill-and-run motorist such an improvement on the savage who raped and slew that we may boast of him? Almost every night now I hear an announcement on the wireless that a man or a woman has been found dead on the road, left there to die by some speed-fool who killed and decamped without stopping to see whether he could succour or save his victim. Motorists in Great Britain have killed more people in one year than all our railways since George Stephenson invented the Rocket! They kill more men, women and children in a fortnight than the whole of the British railways kill in seven years. The total number of persons *killed* by motorists in 1933 exceeded by 2,787 the total number of persons who were *killed and injured* on the railways of these islands in the previous seven years. If the railways in their pioneering days, had slain a twentieth of the number of people now annually slain by motorists, they would have been scrapped as a result of public clamour.

I heard a tourist in the Temple of Bacchus at Baalbec expressing surprise that the Romans could have worshipped such gods as Jupiter, and I thought to myself how unwarrantably complacent we are when we preen ourselves on our enlightenment and progress. Was it more absurd to worship the sun than it is to worship the Trinity? Were the ancients, who

believed that Aphrodite sprang fully-panoplied from the head of Jove, more ridiculous than we who believe that Mary remained a virgin after she had conceived Jesus through the agency of an abstraction called the Holy Ghost, and that she herself was immaculately conceived by Saint Anne? How quickly we laugh at the superstitions of other people, how prompt we are to resent laughter at our own. I find nothing more incredible in the hagiology of ancient Greece or Rome than is to be found in a pamphlet (No. 1181) entitled *Teresa Helena Higginson*, which was written by Lady Cecil Kerr and is published by The Catholic Truth Society of Ireland. In this singular work is set out the career of a lady, obviously suffering from erotic neurasthenia, who, it is hoped, 'may be raised to the altars of the church'.

XLVI

Teresa Helena Higginson was born at Holywell in 1844. She died at Chudleigh, in Devon, on February 15, 1906, and was buried at Neston, Cheshire, where her grave, according to Lady Cecil Kerr, 'has come to be a place of pilgrimage'. Her parents were excessively, almost nauseatingly, pious – they had gone on a pilgrimage to Holywell – and had a private chapel in their house at Gainsborough. The odour of sanctity must have been thick, even suffocating, in the Higginsons' home, but it did not save them from financial disaster: Mr. Higginson, when his daughter was twenty, became a bankrupt, and his family were reduced to poverty. When Teresa was 'barely four years of age', she underwent her first spiritual experience. During the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lady, an event on which the Gospels are strangely silent, 'a great storm arose in Teresa's baby heart', and the infant of four prostrated herself before the altar 'and vowed herself to Our Lord as His spouse for ever, and, as though to show His acceptance of her offering, Almighty God flooded her soul with light, revealing to her the sublime mystery of the Blessed Trinity . . . and how Mary was the tabernacle of the thrice Blessed Trinity'.

Soon after Teresa had been made the recipient of this sublime secret, 'she committed her first sin – a childish act of disobedience', and was taught by it so clearly 'the awfulness of sin and

the terrible price Our Lord had paid for it, that her one thought henceforth was to share His suffering and offer herself as a victim of atonement'. It is not incredible that a child of four should have undergone extreme spiritual excitements – children experience these emotions more often than adults suppose – but it is difficult to feel Lady Cecil Kerr's assurance that the baffling mystery of the Trinity was communicated to this child by God Himself. As Teresa 'grew older her self-inflicted penances sound well-nigh incredible'. She was so determined to make her first Communion that the nuns in a convent school at Nottingham allowed her to make it when she was thirteen lest she should fall into a decline. 'Her education was interrupted by frequent illnesses, brought on in great measure by the severe penances she used secretly to practise'. She began to see visions. She saw angels around the altar, 'and sometimes Our Lady would come and bring the Holy Child "that I might look into His Little Face and see how good he is", but more often her hours of prayer were passed in utter desolation'. She spent a 'livelong day' kneeling 'before the Blessed Sacrament'.

After her father's bankruptcy had occurred, Teresa became first a needlewoman, and then an elementary teacher at St. Mary's School, Wigan, where she was joined by Miss Susan Ryland, 'who became her closest friend, and who has related many details of this eventful period of her life:

'The two lived together in a little room, sharing a single bed, and Miss Ryland thus became the silent witness of many strange events of which she only later realised the true significance. The first thing which puzzled her was the curious state of unconsciousness in which Teresa was so often found. One night she ran in terror for the priest – Teresa seemed at the point of death – but on Father Wells' sprinkling her with holy water she at once came to herself. Gradually Miss Ryland realised that this condition was no illness – Teresa was in ecstasy. Often in the mornings she was so weak and prostrate that her friend had almost literally to carry her to church, but as soon as she had received Holy Communion she revived, and would return home to carry out the duties of the day. During Lent these strange symptoms became even more pronounced. From the agonised expression on her face, and the words that broke from her unconscious lips, it was clear that she was accompanying Our Lord through the various stages of His Passion, until in the last days of Holy Week, she lay like one dead, speechless and motionless upon her bed. . . . It was in

Lent, 1875, that Our Lord rewarded her love by bestowing on her the title of "Spouse of the Crucified", and by conferring on her the sacred Stigmata, sealing her body with the marks of His five most Sacred Wounds. Miss Ryland was kneeling in prayer beside her when Teresa, who had been in conversation with some unseen presence, suddenly sat up, firmly holding out her hand, and then fell back upon the bed. She kept her hands tightly closed, but Miss Ryland saw that, after washing them, the towel she used was stained with blood. On Good Friday two of the teachers found her lying unconscious, her arms stretched out, and wounds on her hands and feet. Teresa never spoke of this, but afterwards she told Father Powell that Our Lord had indeed conferred on her His Sacred Wounds, and that she had begged of Him *to remove the outward signs*, but to increase, if possible, the pain.'

The italics in the final passage of that quotation are mine. Our Blessed Lady often visited Teresa, but the less ethereal Miss Ryland failed on each occasion to see her. St. Joseph and St. Peter were other visitors.

'But at other times there were visitations of a very different order. Terrible shrieks and yells would fill the house, crashes like thunder would shake the very walls, and ghostly lights would flicker round the rooms, till Miss Ryland . . . '

whose capacity for observing demoniac signals is remarkable, considering how imperceptive she was to divine manifestations,

' . . . cried aloud in terror. But Teresa would calm her, saying: "It is only the devil, dear. He cannot really harm us, he just wants to be noticed. Let us get on with our prayers."'

The renown of Miss Higginson spread through Wigan, in spite of Miss Higginson's efforts to conceal her incipient saintliness; and it became common for unfortunate or invalid people to come to her for help. 'A fire was wanted in a hurry for an invalid: Teresa made the sign of the Cross over the dead embers and immediately they sprang into flame.' A child was cured of a chest complaint by the application of common lard. 'The firewood had run out. Teresa told Miss Ryland,' who may, not irreverently, be described as Teresa's Dr. Watson, 'to look in a certain cupboard. "I have looked and it is empty," came the answer. "Well, ask St. Joseph, and look again." "He won't do it for me, - you ask him," said Miss Ryland, and then

going once again to see, she found a pile of logs quite different from those they generally bought.'

Three years later Teresa's health failed, and she left Wigan, but almost immediately afterwards took charge of a school at Sabden, 'so lonely and forlorn a spot that no teacher could be found to undertake it,' and here she suffered the extreme discomfort of living so far from a Roman Catholic Church that she could not attend daily mass. Her sense of deprivation was acute. 'She describes her craving for It' the Holy Communion, 'as so intense that she seemed literally about to die. And then Our Lord came Himself most wonderfully to satisfy her'. About two or three in the morning He came to her, wearing, she thought, a stole, and gave her the Sacred Host—'I know it was a real Host'—and when she had 'received Him He drew me so entirely into Himself that I was lost in His immensity and love'.

'This miracle was frequently repeated in after years, as we learn from several of her friends who were privileged to witness it. Teresa would be lying back in ecstasy in her chair when suddenly the Sacred Host would appear above her head and disappear into her mouth. Miss Catterall still treasures the little book in which she noted down the different occasions on which she saw this happen—often several times in a single day.'

a strange feat, indeed, especially as it is forbidden in the Roman Catholic Church for anyone to communicate more than once a day.

From Sabden Miss Higginson migrated to St. Alexander's school at Bootle, where she remained for seven years, during which time 'she was forced into painful notoriety', being 'called by Our Lord, as she describes it, to leave the loved seclusion of Gethsemane, and follow Him in shameful publicity to Mount Calvary:

'She lived with some of her fellow teachers in one of a row of commonplace brick houses, but from her window she could see the red light of the sanctuary, and here it was that, night after night, she wrote so painfully the marvellous series of letters in obedience to her confessor. Here, too, she was frequently assaulted by the devil, and often the panic stricken girls who shared her lodging would rush for Father Powell, terrified by the unearthly shrieks and sulphurous smells which filled the house. Here again she was often found in ecstasy, when nothing

could recall her save the voice of Father Powell, which she instantly obeyed. Her friends became so used to seeing her in this condition that at last they ceased to pay any attention to it, merely remarking to one another: "Look, Teresa has popped off again." Both teachers and children frequently drew attention (to her deep embarrassment) to the blood upon her hands and head and Miss Catterall once met her coming out of church, her scarf all stained with the blood that dripped from little wounds like thorn marks upon her brow. . . .

I interrupt the quotation at this point to emphasise what follows:

' . . . They knew she spent her nights in prayer and, keeping a close watch upon her, were convinced she never ate. Father Snow confirms this last opinion, declaring that, for many years, no food passed her lips but the Blessed Sacrament. He once forbade her to pretend to eat as she sometimes did in order to escape notice, and told her instead to stay away from meals. She did so, but found afterwards that her absence had never been observed and concluded that her guardian angel, to whom she had a special devotion, must have replaced her at the table. "I told her that for the future she might appear to eat as formerly," adds Father Snow.'

She is said to have cured 'many a minor ache' in her pupils 'by the application of her crucifix', and there is a curious story, singularly lacking in explanatory details, of the way in which 'She once reconciled a murderer on the eve of his execution. He had sullenly refused the priest, but Teresa, having gained access to his cell', an access which is not explained, 'threw her arms around his neck, exclaiming, "See, dear father what a lovely bunch of grapes I have brought you." And the poor sinner's heart was won.'

Trouble now befell her. 'Controversy waxed ever higher' about her sanctity, some saying she was a saint, and others that she was a liar and a hypocrite, 'till the bishop of the diocese thought it necessary to intervene. While refusing actually to condemn her, he bade her change her confessor — the hardest trial she could have faced, for it left her, as it were, adrift and rudderless upon the angry sea.' It was after the separation from Father Powell that she met Canon Snow, 'in whose wide guidance her soul was to find peace for the remainder of her life'. Father Powell was removed from Bootle and Miss Higginson was dismissed from the school. Her mother died, and she

returned to her sisters' home at Neston, but had great difficulty in finding employment. She spent the following Lent with Miss Catterall and Miss Nicholson at Newchurch where, 'according to the testimony of these friends her days were passed in almost unbroken ecstasy. . . . They were often the awed witnesses of her miraculous Communions.'

It was apparent to Canon Snow that these experiences were part of her preparation for 'a great end', that 'they were, in fact, the final purification for the crowning event of her life — what is known to mystical theologians as the *Mystical Marriage*, the closest union with God possible to a soul on earth:

'The saints themselves alone can understand this mystery, but we are allowed to glimpse it from afar, and in all our literature it would be hard to find a more sublime and touching document than that in which Teresa describes it to her confessor. It took place in a tiny attic room at Clitheroe on the Feast of the Redeemer, 23rd October, 1887. She felt, as she writes, "her spirit softly stealing through the gate of death from very love" when Our Lord appeared to her holding the Blessed Sacrament in His Hand and gave Himself to her in Holy Communion — "And my Divine Spouse spoke to my soul, and said He would now fulfil the promise He had made to me so often, and present me to the Adorable Trinity and unite Himself to me in presence of the whole court of heaven." I felt annihilated at these words, for I felt my nothingness and unworthiness, and I think I would really have died if He had not supported me by a new miracle of power and love. Then He said: "Arise, my beloved, that I may glorify the Triune God in Unity and espouse thee in their Adorable Presence." And turning then to His blessed Mother, He gave me to her as her daughter, and Mary, taking hold of my hand, gave it to Jesus, and He withdrew the ring that He had before placed upon it and then replaced it on the same finger, saying, "I espouse thee in the name, and in the presence of the uncreated Trinity and in the presence of my Immaculate Mother, and I give you to her as my spouse for ever."'

Canon Snow congratulated her with all his heart on her 'marriage with the Lamb. . . . I feel like Lazarus in the presence of Dives,' and unfortunate comparison, 'and I beg of you and your Divine Spouse that I may have some of the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table.'

The following twelve years were spent by Teresa in St. Catherine's Convent, Edinburgh. 'The sister who tended her

at these times testified to having seen the wounds upon her feet and the thorn marks on her brow. She also once saw her miraculously receive Holy Communion.' In 1899, Teresa left the Convent to nurse her sister in Neston, and then went to Liverpool and, later, to Rome, where she was received by Pope Leo XIII, and Milan, Assisi, Padua and Bruges. In 1900 she took the school, attended by thirty children, at Chudleigh, where she was unhappy because she was not only 'far from home and friends', but 'what troubled her still more', despite her Divine Espousal and her miraculous capacity to receive the Sacrament from the air, 'far from church and sacraments'. It was at Chudleigh that she died. 'I am not in sorrow about her death,' wrote Canon Snow. 'Knowing all I do about her, I should feel I was not doing right by Our Lord to imagine she was in Purgatory.'

This story was told by Lady Cecil Kerr in the Year of Our Lord, 1933, and was published by The Catholic Truth Society of Ireland, at a building strangely called Veritas House, 7 and 8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin, with the imprimatur of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. Nothing that is supposed to have happened in the temples of Jupiter and Bacchus seems more absurd.

XLVII

There are only five cedar groves left on Lebanon now, and I did not see any of them, but there were great forests of them everywhere on the mountains when Solomon was building his temple. Mr. Alouf describes a journey which the visitor may make from Baalbec to Djeben-el-Arz or the Cedar Mountains, which are 7,700 feet high. From these mountains may be seen a magnificent panorama, mountains and valleys and forests and a lake, Yammouneh. The great plain of Coele-Syria, dotted with streams and villages, stretches into the hazy distance, beyond which, on the slopes of the Anti-Lebanon may be seen Baalbec itself. Mount Hermon lies to the spectator's right, and in the opposite direction he can see the forest of cedars, and beyond these, the city of Tripoli and the Mediterranean. 'Some of the cedars,' says Mr. Alouf, 'measure thirty metres in height,' and he tells his readers that the roof of

the Temple of Diana was made of cedar wood that lasted for four centuries, 'while the Temple of Diana in Numidia remained in a perfect state of preservation for 1,500 years.'

David built his palace of cedar wood, and Solomon employed 20,000 woodmen to cut down cedars and cypress-trees to be used in his Temple. He returned a message to Hiram, the King of Tyre, who had very civilly sent a mission to congratulate him on his accession to the throne of Israel, to say that he proposed to build a temple. 'Now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar-trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants; and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians.' This handsome compliment was handsomely received, and Hiram informed Solomon that 'I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shall appoint me,' which was Jaffa, 'and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. So Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees and fir-trees according to all his desire. And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year:

'And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together. And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and Adoniram was over the levy. And Solomon had three-score thousand hewers in the mountains; Beside the chief of Solomon's officers which were over the work, three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.'

It was a tremendous temple, taking seven years to build, and was built, it seems, entirely of cedar; 'there was no stone seen'. But his own house occupied the builders longer than the temple: it took thirteen years to build, and it, too, was built 'of the forest

of Lebanon'. There is a legend that the Cross was made of cedar wood. Hiram, who was a brass-worker as well as a king, 'and cunning to work all works in brass', accepted a contract to decorate the Temple and Solomon's house, and it kept him occupied for twenty years. At the end of that time the Temple being finished, Solomon, to show his pleasure in Hiram's work, gave him 'twenty cities in the land of Galilee. And Hiram came out of Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day'. If these cities were anything like the Arab walled city I saw in the Syrian desert, to which I shall presently refer, I am not at all astonished at Hiram's dissatisfaction or the name he gave them: Cabul, which means 'good for nothing'. The story is hard to follow. Solomon, a very ostentatious man who was reputed to be wise in spite of the fact that he had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, seems to have got rid of his slum property in the pretence of rewarding Hiram for his skill, and yet to have been paid 'six score talents of gold' or, as Dr. James Moffat says in his translation of the Bible, £693,000 for it. This is the sort of thing that makes Jews unpopular. It appears, however, that Hiram continued to be friendly with Solomon, the astute, and helped to man his navy. His ships brought the gold from Ophir.

The Romans were less fond of cedar than Solomon was, and they used immense quantities of stone in building their temples, using also, of course, the stone that had been used in the Temple of Baal and was lying about. Their stones too are tumbled, thrown down, first by an earthquake in 1158, and then by a flood in 1318. An earthquake shook the town terribly in 1665, and another almost completely destroyed it in 1759. Three of the nine columns of the great Temple of Jupiter — all that were left of the fifty-four columns which enclosed the Temple — were thrown down, leaving the six we can now see in their place. This earthquake, in 1759, lasted in spasms for twenty-seven days, and Baalbec's splendour was over when it ceased to tremble.

Sir William Worsley and I, daunted by the height of the steps we were expected to climb to survey the whole of the remains,

stayed in the Great Court of the Temple of Jupiter and ruminated on the great stones we saw around us. We leaned against an enormous stone which, however, was a mere brick compared with the megaliths in the western supporting wall, called the Trilithon or Cyclopaen wall, of the terrace of this Temple. They are so large that the Arabs assert, and so did many Europeans, that they must have been hewn from the quarries which lie about ten minutes' walk from Baalbec by a race of giants, who had them hauled by mastodons in the time of Cain. There are three of these megaliths, measuring from 63 to 64 feet in length and over 13 feet in height and 12 feet in breadth. Each of them weighs about 750 tons, and has been raised 20 feet above the ground. No one knows how the feat was accomplished, although there has been a great deal of ingenious, if implausible, speculation on the subject. They are so nicely placed that it is almost impossible to pass a needle between the joints. There are other stones, smaller than these megaliths, but large enough to baffle our wits when we try to think how they were brought from the quarries and placed in position. The north and south walls of the Temple contain nine stones each, and each stone is 33 feet long, 14 feet high, and 10 feet broad. At the entrance to the quarries, which lie on the road to Maallaka, may be seen an enormous stone, still undetached from the earth, although it is hewn and squared, which was, presumably, intended to be laid in the Temple. It is called Hajar-el-Hobla, the stone of the pregnant woman, and it is 69 feet in length, 16 feet in breadth, and nearly 14 feet in height. Mr. Alouf says it weighs 915 tons, but D. G. Hogarth, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, asserts that its weight is 'about 1,500 tons'. The labour of forty thousand men, it has been estimated, would have been required to move this stone, but the estimate leaves us unenlightened, for how could forty thousand men have been hitched to it? The stones *were* moved, but *how*? And at that question our minds boggle. We do not know.

Was their removal accompanied by much suffering? How many slaves were crushed to death by these great blocks before they were placed in position? There are graves in the quarries, and here bodies, said to be those of Christians condemned to hard labour for life, have been found. Could these stones

speak, would they cry out with ages of agony? Or are we, the pampered children of the Machine Age, attributing to other people the pains we suppose we might ourselves have endured had we been compelled to lift the stones out of their beds and raise them here in the Temple of Jupiter? Is it possible that the men who moved the megaliths enjoyed their labour? Was the overseer's whip worse than the foreman's order? May not his flickings have seemed to the sweating slaves who pushed and pulled the stones no more than the humorous abuse of the drill-sergeants seemed to the recruits in the European War? Was there not, perhaps, some incommunicable satisfaction felt when, at last, the enormous mass of masonry was settled in its place? Did not the slaves stand back and cheer when they saw the stone subside on the mortar so neatly that there is no room for a piece of paper between it and its neighbour? Or did they despond as, straightening their tired backs and wiping the sweat from their bloodshot eyes, they saw how little it had added to the great Temple, how much had yet to be done? There still were hundreds of blocks of stone to be brought from the quarries, either on the Maallaka road or, further away, from Kayal, and lifted into position — more effort to be made, more agony to be borne — and at the end of it all, what?

As Sir William Worsley and I negligently reclined against a megalith that a swarm of sweating slaves had hewn and squared and moved, I tried to feel like a workman in Heliopolis. Was there *any* fun for him? Had he *any* hope? Did he ever, at the end of a day, console himself with the thought, 'Well, that's done, and now I can relax and enjoy myself?' Or was his life a long unending labour, with no reward at the end — only a brutal thrusting aside of a useless and broken tool?

I do not understand the scale of our values. Why do we suppose that a gentleman who knows all about little glass bottles and broken bits of statuary that were buried in Baalbec a thousand years ago is more important to the community than a mason? Is the Cambridge graduate who can write with authority on the misplaced commas in the works of Restoration dramatists doing greater service to his country than a ploughman? Are the archaeologist and the critics more skilled than the mason and the ploughman, and is their skill more valuable? It is not necessary to be either a Socialist or a Com-

unist to find the answers we now return to these questions unsatisfactory. The Communist disposes of the problem too simply. He applies the utilitarian test to labour, and solves every puzzle by asking himself, 'What *use* is it?' Can it have an immediate practical result? He is the spiritual descendant of the Victorian manufacturers who resisted every proposal to educate working-people beyond the instruction that was 'useful'. What, they inquired, was the good of teaching a labourer's child algebra, French or music? How would these accomplishments enable the child to earn its living? Putting ideas into its head! . . . Giving it notions above its station! . . . To read and write and do simple arithmetic and be respectful to the upper classes was all a labourer's child needed to know! . . . A variation of this astonishing doctrine animates the mind of a Communist. The man who makes bread or builds houses or sweeps roads is more important than the man who paints pictures or composes music or writes poems or uncovers little glass bottles that were buried long ago in Baalbec! . . .

I do not see the solution of the problem so simply. I wish the world to be enriched with more and more 'useless' knowledge because I do not regard education merely as a means to earn fifty shillings a week instead of thirty. But I am bothered, too, by the ploughman's plight, and I am certain that his accomplishment is very great. Consider what a ploughman knows: the grain of the soil and the seeds to sow; the right season to sow and the right place in which to sow; the nature of earth and the nature of beasts. Consider, too, the skill that enables him to turn a long, straight furrow. There is beauty in a ploughed field, and the ploughman patiently puts it there. Yet a smart little button-pusher or lever-puller or machine-minder who performs one minute operation every day, an operation worthless in itself, perhaps, and worthless even as part of the whole, is not ashamed to sneer at this accomplished man because he is slow in his speech or unacquainted with the name of the latest film star. An agricultural labourer must know about weather and earth and cattle and seeds and markets and men. A 'hand' in a factory need not know the whole of the footling task he helps to perform. Every summer, factory-hands and clerks come down to our little town, and we are glad to see them, although they forget to bring their manners with

them and are inclined to treat countrymen as ignorant yokels. They make us wonder whether they have any sense, so foolish are the things they do. We warn them not to bathe in certain places, but into that water they go, and our people have to pull them out. We exhibit notices to tell them that the cliffs are dangerous and must neither be scaled nor sat under because falls are frequent and unforeseeable; but they climb them or sit under them, and our people have to collect their remains and carry them either to the hospital or the mortuary. Boys and girls who have never handled a boat, except perhaps on the Serpentine, boldly venture on to the English Channel, and are lost all night. Our people have to search for them on land and sea. In a fortnight three different lots of London smarties were injured or almost drowned in our town because they had neglected warnings or behaved in some incredibly foolish fashion. Yet each of these smarties is assured that he or she knows infinitely more than fishermen and ploughboys, and despairs their ancient lore and local knowledge as the nonsense of chawbacons and bumpkins.

XLVIII

As I sauntered with Sir William Worsley through the Great Court I saw signs of egotism more pointless than the Kaiser's. There seems to have been an epidemic about 1880-6 of insignificant persons who sought to immortalise themselves by chiselling their names on Baalbec's monuments. One man had chiselled his name in letters half a foot high. I cannot remember his name, but it ran like this:

A. B. ANON, M.D.
U.S.A. 1883

The Press these days is filled with fulsome flattery of The Little Man who is persuaded to give himself airs to which he is not entitled and is told that he bears all the burdens. We no longer depict John Bull as a fine, upstanding man, but as a crawling creature, John Citizen or The Little Man, who meanly slinks around and grumbles at his betters. The drab are not happy until they have made everybody as drab as themselves, and ineffective egotists are compelled to sponge

on the renown of other people for any renown they hope to obtain. Their names, by themselves, excite no comment, so they chisel them on ancient monuments and scrawl them in public places that they may be noticed. That paltry doctor scratched his name on a great acropolis, and returned to the 'U.S.A.' imagining himself immortal. He was infamous.

That night as I was sitting in my bedroom, making up my mind to go to bed because the electric light in the public rooms of the hotel was so dim that reading was impossible, I heard a noise in the street and saw the flashing of lanterns. I went into the garden and watched a procession pass by. A Syrian was standing at the gate, and I inquired the purpose of the procession. He exclaimed bitterly against it. 'The fools,' he said several times, and told me that the processionists had been bidding good-bye to delegates who were starting for France to demand self-government for Syria. I stood by the railings and observed the crowd. They chattered a good deal as they marched past, but they were well-behaved and might have been an Order of Rechabites returning from a treat. Some of the women were veiled, and again I thought to myself how oddly this symbol of seclusion and subjection went with public protests. In a little while the last of the processionists had passed on his way home, and the street became silent. I could hear a tiny trickle of water somewhere and I listened to it for a few moments. Then I went to bed in moonlight and, in the morning, drove to Damascus.

XLIX

The road from Baalbec took us again over the Lebanon, and down to plains which ran for miles under the feet of these beautiful mountains. Hermon, always snowy-headed, rose serenely above them and stood sentinel over Syria. The wide sweep of brown earth, reaching from the road to the brown and yellow mountains, which were misty in the heat, was of a brilliant colour that I cannot describe. I tried to fit word after word to its hue: brown, yellow, brown-orange, tawny; but none of them fitted, for the colours changed and merged so quickly that a word that was right at one moment was wrong at the next. It must be enough, therefore, if I say that Syria is as

beautiful as its name: one of the loveliest countries in the world. We ran up hills again and then came down to Damascus by the side of a river. 'What's its name?' someone inquired, and was told 'the Abana', whereupon those of us who had received a good Bible education murmured to one another, 'Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?' I did not come close enough to Pharpar, the crooked river, to observe its quality, but the Abana justified Naaman, the leper's, wrath when he heard himself requested to dip seven times in the Jordan, a river that is comparatively ignominious. But virtue is in the act, and not in the place where the act is performed.

'The Light of Lights

Looks always on the motive, not the deed
The Shadow of Shadows on the deed alone.'

says the Angel in *The Countess Cathleen*, and Naaman, the leper, captain of the host of the King of Syria, who was a mighty man in valour, should have remembered that faith is not in flaunting, but in obedience. The Abana, or Barada, seemed to be full of glacier water, drawn, I suppose, from the snows of Anti-Lebanon, where it rises near the small town of Zebadani. Like the Pharpar, which is now called the 'Awaj — there is, however, some doubt of the identity of the Pharpar with the 'Awaj — it runs down from the mountains in a narrow channel and spreads itself fanwise over the plain of Damascus, irrigating it thoroughly, after which it loses itself in the marshes called the Meadow Lakes and is seen no more. It is these rivers, the Abana and the Pharpar, which make a great oasis of Damascus.

Damascus is the oldest city in the world, yet its appearance shows no sign of its age. It might almost be a modern shanty town, thrown up in haste and ready to be thrown down as hastily. Mr. Morton was disappointed in it and, indeed, many visitors to this ancient town are as deeply disappointed in it as he was. It has had too much history to be full of monuments. Nation after nation has battered it about — ancients so distant that their race is scarcely surmisable, Israelites and Syrians, Moslems and Christians, Egyptians, Mongolians and Turks — and there have been great slaughterings and burnings and razings and destruction. The bloodthirsty men do not stop to preserve ancient monuments when their throats are

dry; and if they can find an excuse in religion for destroying a beautiful building or a lovely statue, they will not delay their destruction while they consider what posterity will think of them. The Jews, and all the beauty-loathing Puritans who have followed in their steps, obeyed the Mosaic Law against graven images with exceptional fidelity whenever a statue was seen. Bigotry and beauty do not consort together; for the first must destroy the second or shrivel in its presence. Damascus might have had more to show the visitor if it had not had so many unfriendly visitors in the past. Its modern history is no less disturbed than its ancient. After the tyranny of the Turk was overcome, the Syrians, elated by liberty, hurriedly and without reference to the Allies, in a National Council held in March 1920, proclaimed Faisal, son of Hussein, King of the Hejaz, King of Syria with his capital in Damascus. It was not long a royal seat. In the following July the French established a mandate over Syria and declared it a republic. To console Faisal for the loss of his throne, four months old, he was, on August 23, 1921, proclaimed King of Iraq of Mesopotamia. He died suddenly at Berne on September 8, 1933. The French had better have left him in Syria. We take too much upon ourselves when we impose our institutions on people who neither understand nor desire them.

L

I had been told I should hate Damascus, but the moment I reached it I knew I should like it, as indeed I did, though I can scarcely tell why, and I would more gladly return to it than to some of the towns I visited. The fact that it is the oldest city in the world was immaterial to me who find nothing attractive in age merely because it is age. I like things for their look, and not for their age. There is old and complicated life in Damascus and aggressive new life. Both excited me. My head was full of stuff about silk damasks and Damascene swords and I repeated the beautiful name, Damascus, to myself merely to hear it sounding in my mind. Yet I felt a brief disappointment that the centuries had left so few marks on Damascus. Here is a city which is mentioned in the book of Genesis xiv. 15, and is less ancient looking than Chester. I had expected

to see the signs of Creation on it. I might turn a corner and suddenly see the thumbmark of God! . . . I am not one of those people who think that a butcher in Smyrna is more romantic than a butcher in Sheffield, nor can I work myself into an ecstasy about picturesque squalor. The butcher in Sheffield may be more romantic than the butcher in Smyrna, though I should feel no surprise if he were not; for romance is everywhere and to be found by those who look for it. I have been in bazaars in Istanbul and Damascus and Jerusalem, but I did not find them more exciting or romantic than the Caledonian Market or Burlington Arcade. There was nothing more exciting in David Street, Jerusalem, than I used to see in East Street, Walworth, when on Sunday mornings I wandered through its market; nor have I felt anything in either to surpass the thrills I received in my boyhood in Belfast when I prowled fearfully through Smithfield Market. It was in East Street that I learnt to be distrustful of demagogues. One morning I came upon a quack who was selling a medicine which, it seemed, would cure every complaint from corns to cancer. If there was any person in that crowd who was suffering from toothache, the professor would undertake to cure him or her instantaneously. A sufferer *was* present, and he stalked self-consciously into the middle of the circle of people surrounding the quack, who opened a bottle containing, I suspect, a strong-smelling liquid, and thrust it under the patient's nose. The effect of inhaling this powerful odour was so shocking that the man forgot his toothache and, in reply to a question from the quack, declared himself cured. The traffic in the potion was brisk! . . . Soon after the departure of the quack I saw the sufferer from toothache holding his face. 'Have you got it again?' I said. 'Yes,' he replied, 'an' a bloody 'eadache too!' I recall this incident when I hear of power to cure us instantly of all our ills.

But it is our nature to think that what is commonplace at home is rare and romantic abroad, and who am I that I should moralise about it? The man who lives in Donaghadee will feel a thrill in Damascus that is not felt by the Syrian who lives there, but might be felt by him if he were to visit Donaghadee. The Cromwell Road bores me, but it might enthral a Copt. Musing thus I resolved that I would not feel disappointed by

any signs of modernity I might see in Palestine or Syria. Places will not stay put, nor have we any right to expect them to be kept as museums for the gratification of occasional tourists. Thomas Hardy wrote a poem entitled *Welcome Home*, in which these feelings are expressed and exilic emotion takes a toss from reality:

'To my native place
Bent upon returning,
Bosom all day burning
To be where my race
Well were known, 'twas much with me
There to dwell in amity.

'Folk had sought their beds,
But I hailed: to view me
Under the moon, out to me
Several pushed their heads,
And to each I told my name,
Plans, and that therefrom I came.

'"Did you? . . . Ah, 'tis true
I once heard, back a long time,
Here had spent his young time,
Some such man as you. . . .
Good-night." The casement closed again
And I was left alone in the frosty lane.'

The exile is eager to find things at home exactly as he left them, and bitterly resents every change he sees. But why should he suppose that time and events will stand still in his native place merely because he has gone away? It is a queer habit of mind which makes us wish that Damascus should have remained as it was when the four kings fought and defeated the five in the vale of Siddim, capturing all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and taking Lot a prisoner.

I was not upset, then, as some of our party were, when I saw in the centre of Damascus the largest motor-omnibus in the world about to start for Baghdad. Damascus to Baghdad! There the names were, written unevenly on the side of an omnibus, as one would write, Chalk Farm to Camberwell Green and people went and sat in the 'bus as if it were just a 'bus and not, as in my mind I thought it, the whole romantic history of mankind. Did the conductor, as he punched a ticket for a lady, say, 'O moon of my delight, the fare is! . . .' I told myself

that the ancients of this town, could they return to it, would be dazzled by the splendour of this great caravan which moves without visible means of propulsion. Had Haroun-al-Raschid any car to surpass it? Would not that inquisitive monarch have fainted with astonishment if he could have visualised this scene in Damascus: a great horseless chariot in which *anybody*, sultan or sweeper, could ride if he had the money to pay for his seat?

I came away from the largest motor-omnibus in the world and walked around the circus in which it stood until I came to an opening, a wide square whose fourth side was the opening into the circus, that led to a steep and narrow lane; and here I found myself in a bazaar, 'half as old as time', that seemed unaware of the brisk and modern circus I had just left. I looked into shop windows, small, dark and, I fear, dirty shops, in which queer food was sold, and wished I had the nerve to buy some of it. Men came and bought their midday meal in a baker's shop, an odd meal for men to make: a large squashy crumpet as big as a dinner-plate, a filling, but not, I should have imagined, a sustaining food. A string of camels, led by a donkey, came padding softly up the narrow street into the circus and, indifferent to progress, slumped past the largest motor-omnibus in the world without turning to look at it. 'These will go forward the same, though the Dynasties pass.' Moslem women, dressed in black from head to foot, and heavily veiled, walked side by side with Syrian Christians in modern clothes. Every man, whether Moslem or Christian, wore the fez, which is forbidden in Turkey, and a silly sort of hat it is, as senseless as any that men wear, for it is no protection from the sun and is scarcely any protection from the rain. But, being brimless, it is useful for purposes of piety. The Moslem must wear his hat in mosques, and as he is obliged to prostrate himself several times while he is praying, touching the ground with his forehead, his hat must be brimless so that he may conveniently do this. Thus piety fixes the shape of our hats! . . .

We went to see a mosque which was reputed to be very fine, but were unable to enter it because a service was being held. I minded this objection to our entry less than was reasonable, considering that I might never have another opportunity of seeing it; for the sun was very pleasant and there was as much to see outside the mosque as there might be inside. An enor-

mous ablutionary pool occupied the greater part of the court-yard, and I watched devout Moslems at the ceremonial washing of face and feet and hands with which they begin their prayers, and a thorough washing it was. Mr. Reuben Levy, in his admirable volumes, *The Sociology of Islam*, gives details of ablutionary ritual. The Koran says:

'You who believe! Come not to prayer being drunk, [but wait] until you can understand what you say; nor polluted — except you are travelling on the road — until you have washed yourselves. And if you are sick or on a journey, or if one of you have come from the privy or you have touched women, and you have not found water, then cleanse yourselves with some pure part of the surface of the ground, rubbing it upon your face and hands.

'You who believe! When you address yourselves to prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your hands and feet up to the ankles.'

It was these ablutionary rites that I watched while we were outside the Mosque, the name of which I have forgotten, for admission that we did not obtain. Youths came and washed lettuce in the pool where other men were washing themselves, and then reclined against the pool's side and ate it. I do not presume to have views on Arabian diet, but it seemed to me from what I saw of the meals the Arabs ate, that malnutrition in these people is almost inevitable; and Doughty confirmed my belief when I referred to *Arabia Deserta*. He calls them 'a weak-dieted people', and attributes the prevalent ophthalmia partly to their malnutrition, and partly to their habit of drinking cold water at night. 'In the month of Lent,' he says:

'a kind of rheumatic ophthalmia is rife; the cause of it (which may hardly be imagined in countries of a better diet) is the drinking of cold water to bedward, as it is chilled in the gribies; and perhaps they slept abroad or uncovered, and the night's chill fell upon them towards morning, when they are in danger to waken with the rime about their swollen eyelids. The course of the disease is ten days with a painful feeling in the nearly closed eyes of dust and soreness, and not without danger of infiltration under the cornea of an opaque matter; and so common is this malady in the Nejd settlements, that amongst three persons, there is commonly some one purblind. Ophthalmia is a besetting disease of all the Arab blood, and in this soil even of strangers.'

He describes an experiment he made on himself when he 'drank every evening a large draught out of the suspended gribies' to see whether his eyes, too, would suffer. They did, and remained weak ever after.

The Arabs are mean about medicine men, and will almost die rather than part with a penny for a potion. They believe that sore eyes may be healed by spittle. 'A young mother, yet a slender girl, brought her wretched babe, and bade me spit upon the child's sore eyes; this ancient Semitic opinion and custom I have afterwards found wherever I came in Arabia.' Jesus is alleged, in the Gospel of St. John, to have cured a blind man by mixing his spittle with clay and anointing the blind eyes with it. When Doughty 'blamed their superstition', the gossips who came with the young Arab mother to have her child cured of ophthalmia, 'answered simply that "such was the custom here from time out of mind".' The fact that ophthalmia, so easily cured, is still terribly prevalent seems not to have roused any doubt of their superstition in their thoughts. 'Now were I to speak of my medical practice plainly,' Doughty remarks:

'I think it a desperation to cure the Arabs, and that a perfect physician would hardly be praised amongst them. He is lost whose science is slow, and the honest man of few promises; they will despise his doubts and his tentatives. He who would thrive must resemble them, some glozing Asiatic that can file his tongue to the baseness of those Semitic minds. Their wild impatience looks to see marvels: the right physician, only handling a pulse, they think, should be able to divine a man's state and all his past infirmities; and some specific must he have for every disease, because "there is a salve in Nature for every sore"; yet so knavish are they that for all his skill they would pay him only upon a day that is ever to come. The Arabians are ill nourished, and they think themselves always ailing. The nomads live nearly as the wild creatures, without certain diet, and they drink infected waters. Few have not some visceral infirmities - *el-kibd*; and, the wind breathing upon their nearly naked bodies, they are crazed with all kinds of rheums, *er-rih*; a name they give to all obscure, aching diseases. . . . Inured from his youth to bodily extremities, the Beduwy can suffer a painful malady of years, and will sooner pine still than put away his penny for uncertain cures to the *Mudowwy*, or man of medicine. For these Semites, feeling themselves such shrews, have no confidence in man, but in

God only; they would all see the leech's skill proved upon some other than themselves. Thus hardly do any come to the man of medicine till he is about to depart from them; when commonly only the most intractable or hopeless cases will be brought before him. Notwithstanding, they all love to babble-babble their infirmities, in the wholesome ears of the *hakim*. As I have walked in Arabian villages, some have caught me by the mantle to inquire, "Eight! thou the apothecary! canst thou not restore their sight to the blind?"

I was to see many sore-eyed and blind men, women and children in the following week, and I came away from the Near East feeling that Arabia needed, not so much to be a National Home for this, that or the other race, but to be endowed with a series of Ophthalmic Hospitals. The man who can cure the Arab of his filthy habits will be their benefactor.

LI

But the Moslems, if they are devout, wash themselves thoroughly five times every day, and while I waited in the courtyard, I wondered whether Christianity would not be more popular if it were harder. Supposing that we who profess the Christian faith had to wash our faces and our hands up to the elbows and our feet up to the ankles every time we entered Westminster Abbey, and that to enable us to perform these ablutions there were a tank of water as long as the swimming-pool in Westminster Baths, outside the Abbey, might not we become punctilious in our observances? I hear people exclaiming sometimes derisively at those who attend a Communion Service every morning before breakfast, and, indeed, I am inclined to deride them myself, for I dislike to see religion turned into a habit; but what is that compared with a whole people who say their prayers, after ablutions, five times every day, the first prayers being said before dawn? So much piety should surely result in a singularly fine people, but I cannot say that anything I saw or heard in Palestine or Syria caused me to feel that these ancient ritualists were any better than those who were careless about their devotions or reluctant to perform them at all.

Mr. Levy, describing the ritual of Islam, gives a summary of disputation on ceremonials in a book called *Jāmi' al-Saghīr* of

the Hanafite Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Shaybānī. It appears that the learned doctors solemnly debated the right behaviour of a woman who, while saying her prayers, should inadvertently reveal a quarter of her thigh to some lascivious, or even some virtuous, eye. Ought she to say her prayers over again from the beginning, taking care to see that the disturbing limb is heavily covered? There are arguments on the voiding of ablution and the sort of impurity which befouls a garment, a stocking or a shoe. What is a man to do who finds himself in a company at public prayer when he has already recited part of his prayers in private? . . . A little childish, perhaps, but no more childish than the speculations of the medieval Schoolmen on the number of angels able to stand on the point of a needle, or the belief of Plymouth Brethren that God intends to pass the whole of eternity exclusively in their company. Every religion tends to become stereotyped by ceremonial, and a time arrives when the symbol is esteemed more highly than the thing it symbolises. I have heard of a delicate Anglican who became ill if she took the Sacrament fasting, and wondered whether the Almighty would be cross with her if she drank a cup of tea before she went to Communion. It seemed to me He must feel very cross with her for asking such a question.

Islam at first had no particular direction in which to pray. 'The East and the West are God's: therefore whichever way you turn, there is the face of God.' But that conception of God's immanence was too much for the precise priestly mind, and Jerusalem was chosen as the place towards which the devout should turn when they said their prayers, 'but finally', Mr. Reuben Levy remarks, 'Muhammad decided that the *qibla* or point of orientation should be the mosque at Mecca'. And good Moslems would rather die than turn elsewhere, though it does not matter a row of pins where they turn. Arguments as absurd as that agitated the minds of good Protestants in the sixteenth century. How ought the bread and wine to be received – while the communicant was sitting, reclining or kneeling? The *First Book of Common Prayer* obliged the recipient of the Sacrament to kneel while it was administered to him. John Knox thought that was a Popish thing to do, and declared that he would only take it while he sat, and supported his intention with the assertion that that was probably the posture

of the disciples at the first supper. But Cranmer, a better-informed man than Knox, said that the disciples had received it while reclining on couches or long padded mats. If, therefore, the apostolic example was to be followed, every Christian should lie full length on the floor! . . . The children, said Bishop Gore, must have their toys, and this sort of thing is, perhaps, harmless, so long as we know that it is infantile and do not try to give it adult value.

While we waited outside the mosque a muezzin came on to a minaret and called the faithful to prayer. His voice was beautiful in that unsoiled air, and I felt, though I did not understand a word he was saying, that every syllable was uttered distinctly. I liked the intimacy of the call. It indicated the closeness of the mosque to the people who worship in it. The Moslems live so near their mosques that an old man's voice, calling them to prayer, may be heard by all of them. Bells are beautiful in country air, and they, too, have a lovely significance; for they call those afar to the remembrance of their souls. Come and pray, come and pray, come and pray! . . . Remember you are not only a body that must be fed and clothed and housed, but a spirit which can aspire! . . . A guide told me that the muezzins are old men, and that some of them are blind. They live in their minarets, I think he said. Was there, I asked him, any intercourse between Moslems and Christians, and he said, outside their business, there was scarcely any, and almost no inter-marriage. I thought that was odd until I recollect my native city, Belfast, and the strange antagonisms that separate Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Later in the day we were whisked through the Omayad Mosque so quickly that I had a confused memory of it, and could only clear away my confusion by returning to it, on the following afternoon, with Father Sir John O'Connell. I shall leave my recollections of it, then, to the succeeding section. Late in the day I went to see the tomb of Saladin, and came for the first time into sharp disagreement with Mr. Morton, who calls it the gem of Damascus. I thought it the tawdriest thing I had seen since I looked at the mortuary sculptor's monument to Napoleon in Corsica. If I were Saladin I should rise from my tomb and turn Crusader! . . .

We ate well that night and, tempted by the look of a salad,

I disregarded the warning I had received on the *Laetitia* and ordered one. After all, I said to myself, it would do this hotel no good if its guests were suddenly to begin writhing with intestinal pains every time they took a lettuce. The arguments seemed unanswerable and, in fact, I suffered no results more fearful than I should have felt after eating a salad from my garden. But a night or two later, in Nazareth, I met a man who told me he had thought much in the way I did. 'I ate a salad at dinner, and the next thing I knew I was in hospital with gastro-enteritis.' That was enough for me. I waved all salads away thereafter, though I was sorely tempted by them, and I drank no water in Palestine, except a sip at the well in Sychar where Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman and amazed her with his knowledge of her private affairs. The hotel-keeper at Baalbec was indignant at the aspersions on the water-supply there, and assured us it was uncontaminated, but we thought it wiser to leave it alone. The people of Baalbec were inured to it: we were not.

After dinner I sat down for a few minutes in the lobby of the hotel, where guides gathered, and observed an odd fact about them, that many of them were blind of one eye. This infirmity, I was told, was deliberately caused, usually in infancy, by the mother, and was intended to make the child, on reaching manhood, unfit for military service. It seemed queer to me that anyone should be so stupid as to blind a man for life to prevent him from serving his country for a year or two, but the longer I live the queerer everybody seems to be. I am a queer fellow myself, and I do the daftest things, wondering to myself as I do them, *why* I do them. We are an unaccountable lot.

LII

I woke at five the following morning, a feat I am not accustomed to perform, and one I have no wish to repeat, and had breakfast before eight. It was, I discovered, a mistake to be about so early, for eager young men with carpets and antiques to sell, lie in wait for those who loiter in lobbies, and solicit their presence, very politely, in adjoining shops. It is difficult to resist their entreaties, so courteously are they made, but I had to resist them, for I could not carry carpets around with me,

and I could buy antiques in Birmingham or High Holborn more reasonably than in Damascus. I found that by lying shamelessly I could avoid entering the shops and, at the same time, please the pathetically importunate shopkeepers. 'I'm busy now,' I said, 'but if you'll give me your card I'll come later!' 'Will you?' the shopkeeper would reply, his eyes lighting up as if I had promised to purchase his entire stock, and he would hand me a grubby-looking card, with the assurance that he would be there and at my command. But I did not go. One young man whose shop was part of the hotel and had a door opening on to the staircase, seemed always to meet me coming in or out, and each time he turned sorrowful, reproachful eyes on me, as who should say, 'You said you'd come to my shop. I gave you my card! . . .' I smiled at him as warmly as I could, but walked firmly on. I felt afraid that he might burst into tears, and if he had, I should have felt obliged to buy a carpet. Heaven only knows what I should have done with it, trailing it about the Holy Land.

We were taken first to see the window from which Paul was lowered in a basket, and a nice mess the French have made of it. They have filled the window with a grotesque symbol, completely blocking it, and the symbol, a cross-shaped thing, is extremely ugly. A lady who had been to Damascus before assured me that this was not the window she had been shown on that occasion, but guides are careless about relics and will sometimes say the first thing that comes into their heads; nor does it matter much which window it was. The Apostle could have been lowered with ease from any window in that wall, could, indeed, have dropped from one, without the aid of a basket, unless he was still stricken with the effects of his vision, as is very likely. We were invited to look across the wide plain which stretched away from this wall, and were told that it was over there — the guide airily waved an arm at the horizon — that Saul, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, saw a light from heaven suddenly shining round about him, 'And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?'

In that moment the Christian Church received its greatest evangelist. Some people, indeed, assert that it was founded at that moment, although it was not established in authority

until the reign of Constantine, who did not himself formally accept Christianity until twenty-five years after he had imposed it on his people. He was baptised by Eusebius on his death-bed, a skin-of-the-teeth conversion, as William Booth would have called it. If he founded the Christian Church by bringing the Roman Empire over to Christianity, he ruined the Christian religion by making it a state religion. I doubt if St. Paul would have cared much for Constantine, who would probably have put the Apostle to death with as little compunction as he slew his son and wife. If this emperor had not been in so great a hurry to obtain agreed opinions, that offence against religion and reason, the Nicene Creed, might never have been imposed upon Christians. He was the Lloyd George of his age, always in a hurry and ready to snatch at an appearance of unity rather than to work patiently for the reality. It would have been better for religion if this bastard son of a barmaid had never been born.

LIII

Paul is not to every man's taste, yet no one can deny him religious genius. The sweep of his mind and the passion of his belief are terrific. In comparison with him, the apostle Peter is a colourless and insignificant figure, a local preacher instead of a missionary, who, had their fate depended on him, would have left the Christians a shrinking sect in Judea. Paul spread them abroad and gave them a bond of fellowship. His energy was demoniac. It carried him from country to country, causing him to suffer many stripes and harsh imprisonment, and brought him in his old age, it is generally believed, to the headsman's block. His fanaticism makes him contrast unfavourably with Jesus, and it is unfortunate for Christianity that his mind has prevailed in creeds and counsels more than the Saviour's. Augustine and Calvin, John Knox and Torquemada would, we may well believe, have felt more at home with the Tarsiot than with the Nazarene. Paul was to Jesus what Plato was to Socrates, and there must have been many acts performed by the Saviour of which Paul, had he been present at their performance, would heartily have disapproved. Jesus was much too tolerant, too friendly to sinners, too quick

to forgive offence, to be entirely pleasing to Paul, who had to have his own way and, while censorious of others, was sensitive to criticism of himself. If Paul had sat on the edge of the well at Sychar, how differently from Jesus he would have spoken to that Samaritan woman who had had five husbands and was living with a man to whom she was not married. He would have had her in tears of rage! . . .

Paul shows no interest in Jesus, but only in the Christ. The entire tendency of his epistles is away from the life of Jesus and towards the promise of the Resurrection. He seems not only never to have visited Bethlehem and Nazareth, and never to have met Mary, the mother of Jesus, nor any of the friends with whom her son associated, but to have taken no interest in them. His relations with Peter were uncordial and brief. They spent fifteen days together in Jerusalem, three years after Paul's sensational conversion, but did not meet again for fourteen years when Paul went up to Jerusalem to answer a charge of heresy with regard to circumcision. A little later, Peter went to Antioch to see Paul 'who withstood him to his face because he was to be blamed'. About those meetings there can be no dispute; but there is deep dispute about a possible fourth meeting. German critics and their followers in Great Britain assert that the meeting mentioned in Galatians ii. 1-10, is identical with the Apostolic Council or Conference described in Acts xv. Dr. Duncan and other British commentators hold that these two accounts refer, not to the same meeting, but to two separate meetings. If they are right, then Peter and Paul met on four occasions; and that is all, so far as records go, though it is evident from Paul's own accounts of his career, that there could not have been many, if any, more meetings between them. During that first visit, after his conversion, to Jerusalem, Paul saw 'none . . . other of the Apostles save James the Lord's brother', but that was an encounter, as it were, between bishops, and was not, so far as we know, a tribute of respect to the family of the Lord.

The title of *The Acts of the Apostles*, as Dr. Anderson Scott points out, 'is somewhat misleading'. It contains 'the names of only three of the original Twelve; we hear of the death of James the son of Zebedee; his brother John is just mentioned; about Peter we hear a good deal, but about the others, nothing.'

Peter is the central figure in the first part of the book (cc. i–iv); then follow two chapters about Stephen and one about Philip, and from c. ix. onwards the central figure is Paul'. Paul does not appear to have mentioned Jesus to James. The natural inquiries that would seem to pass between a disciple and a relative of his leader seem not to have been made. I cannot imagine myself, had I been in Paul's place, failing to ask questions about the life of Jesus of Nazareth. What, for example, was Jesus doing between the ages of twelve, when he confounded the learned men in the Temple with his precocity, and the age of thirty, when he came to be baptised by his cousin, John, in the Jordan. (Neither he nor the Baptist then, or at any other time, give any hint of their relationship.)

LIV

A Russian, named Nicolas Notovitch, published in French a singular work entitled *La Vie inconnue de Jésus-Christ*¹ in 1894, in which he sought to prove that Jesus spent part of these years in travelling through India, preaching and studying the Vedas, and that he eventually returned to Palestine through Persia, where he nearly lost his life at the hands of Zoroastrian priests. Notovitch professed to have found a scripture in a Buddhist monastery at Himis, in Tibet, in which an account of these Indian adventures is given. It appears from this scripture that 'The divine child, to whom was given the name of Issa, began from his earliest years to speak of the one and indivisible God, exhorting the souls of those gone astray to repentance and the purification of the sins of which they were culpable', and that 'people came from all parts to hear him, and they marvelled at the discourses proceeding from his childish mouth. All the Israelites were of one accord in saying that the Eternal Spirit dwelt in this child:

'When Issa had attained the age of thirteen years, the epoch when an Israelite should take a wife, the house where his parents earned their living, by carrying on a modest trade, began to be a place of meeting for rich and noble people, desirous of

¹ The inquisitive need not concern themselves with the original work, but only with the translation into English, made by Violet Crispe and published by Hutchinson and Co. in 1895, as Notovitch corrected in this edition, the errors he had made in the French.

having for son-in-law the young Issa, already famous for his edifying discourses in the name of the Almighty. Then it was that Issa left the parental house in secret, departed from Jerusalem, and with the merchants set out towards Sindh, with the object of perfecting himself in the Divine Word and of studying the laws of the great Buddhas.

'In the course of his fourteenth year, the young Issa, blessed of God, came on this side of Sindh and established himself among the Aryas, in the land beloved of God. Fame spread the reputation of this marvellous child throughout the length of Northern Sindh, and when he crossed the country of the five rivers and the Radjipoutan, the devotees of the god Djaine prayed him to dwell among them. But he left the erring worshippers of Djaine, and went to Djagguernaut, in the country of Orsis, where repose the mortal remains of Viassa-Krichna, and where the white priests of Brahma made him a joyous welcome. They taught him to read and understand the Vedas, to cure by aid of prayer, to teach, to explain the Holy Scriptures to the people, and to drive out evil spirits from the bodies of men, restoring unto them their sanity. He passed six years at Djagguernaut, at Radjagriha, at Benares, and in the other holy cities; everyone loved him, for Issa lived in peace with the Vaisyas and the Sudras, whom he instructed in the Holy Scriptures.'

His action in treating the Vaisyas and the Sudras as equals of Brahmans and Kshatriyas brought him into conflict with the white priests and the warriors, who 'resolved unto his death', but he was warned of his danger by the Sudras, and fled by night to 'the country of Gaoutamides, the birthplace of the great Buddha Çakya-Mouni, in the midst of a people worshipping the one and sublime Brahma:

'After having perfected himself in the Pâli language, the just Issa applied himself to the study of the sacred writings of the Sudras. Six years after, Issa, whom the Buddha had elected to spread his holy word, had become a perfect expositor of the sacred writings. Then he left Nepal and the Himalayan mountains, descended into the valley of Radjipoutan, and went towards the west, preaching to diverse peoples the supreme perfection of man: Which is — to do good to one's neighbour, being the sure means of merging oneself rapidly in the Eternal Spirit: "He who shall have regained his original purity," said Issa, "will die having obtained remission for his sins; and he will have the right to contemplate the majesty of God."

Issa persuaded the pagans to leave their idols. 'Wherefore I

say unto you, Leave your idols, and perform not rites which separate you from your Father, associating you with the priests from whom the heavens have turned away.' The pagans smashed their idols and alarmed the priests so much that they fled. Issa went into Persia where the priests were so perturbed by his doctrine that they conducted him outside the walls of their city and left him in the wilderness in the hope that wild beasts would destroy him. He was twenty-nine when he returned to Israel. Here he remained for three years, spied on by the servants of Pilate, who feared that he might cause an insurrection, and eventually he was arrested at the instigation of Pilate, who had him tortured in a subterranean cell. The high priests and elders in Israel, learning of his sufferings attempted to obtain his release, but Pilate would not listen to them. 'They then prayed him to allow Issa to appear before the tribunal of the Ancients, so that he might be condemned or acquitted before the festival; and to this Pilate consented.' The priests refused to condemn Issa, but Pilate, enraged by his answers to questions, had him condemned and crucified.

Such is the story of Jesus or Issa, alleged to have been recorded in a scroll laid in the archives of a monastery in Tibet. Many soldiers who have served in the Peninsula are familiar with this legend. There is a striking similarity between the teaching of Jesus and the high moral principles expounded in the Bhagavid-Gita, and the story of Jesus' legendary early life closely resembles the story of the early legendary life of the Lord Krishna. He too, was immaculately conceived and born in a manger among cattle. There was a massacre of innocents, a Transfiguration and a cruel death. Notovitch's claim to have discovered a document in a Tibetan Monastery testifying to the Hidden Life of Jesus was exposed as a forgery by an eminent German orientalist, the late Professor Theodor Nöldeke, in the periodical *Die Nation* (volume 2, page 468 seq).¹

Legends about Jesus' hidden life are abundant. There is, for example, one which asserts that he lived for a long time in Egypt, and a variation of this legend adds that he was a slave in that country.

¹ A letter written by Mr. A. A. Bevan, Trinity College, Cambridge, giving this information, appeared in the *Morning Post* of October 2nd, 1933.

Paul wanted to forget the living Jesus and to remember only the resurrected Christ. Jesus was merely the nucleus of the risen Saviour. Who remembers the acorn when he sees the oak? I formerly imagined that Paul, whose social status was higher than that of Jesus, either deliberately or subconsciously endeavoured to dissociate Christianity from its proletarian origin, disguising his snobbery from himself by spiritualising it. He was an educated man, able to hold his own in debate with learned Greeks and he must often, I thought, have felt galled by the simplicity and ignorance of his associates. The base beginning of Christianity was frequently a reproach to Christians, as we realise from Origen's account of the attack once made by Celsus, and a proud and sensitive man of good family, such as Paul was, may sometimes have been stung by this reproach, and its implication that Christianity was only suitable for slaves, emotional woman, and the lower classes. But I believe now that the whole physical side of man was repugnant to Paul, whose indomitable and untiring spirit periodically found itself hampered by the weak, epileptic body it inhabited. He reminds the recipients of his epistles that 'his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible'. 'I have no complaint against you,' he writes in Dr. Moffatt's translation to the Galatians (iv. 14); 'No, although it was because of an illness (you know) that I preached to you on my former visit, and although my flesh was a trial to you, you did not scoff at me nor spurn me, you welcomed me like an angel of God, like Christ Jesus. You congratulated yourselves. Now what has become of all that?' There was a thorn in his flesh, and he had begged God three times to remove it, but what that thorn was we can only surmise. Dr. Anderson Scott thinks it was 'malaria recurring from time to time in an extreme form', as the result of an infection which he had contracted in 'the low coast-land of Cyprus and Pamphlia', but others suppose him to be referring to sensual desires. To support this supposition they have to assume that he was handsome and attractive to women, though why they should think that sensual desires are felt only by good-looking people is hard to understand. He wanted to forget

the physical in the metaphysical, and to dwell, not on the body of Jesus, but on the spirit of Christ. Paul's assertion of his physical ugliness is in accordance with a tradition of the Early Christian Church that Jesus himself was ugly, the theory being that when God decided to humble himself by becoming man, he determined that the humiliation should be extreme, and so became physically repellent. Guignebert, in his remarkable book, *Jesus*, reminds us that the tradition of a handsome Saviour is much later than the tradition of a Saviour whose appearance was mean and insignificant:

"The more ancient of the two grew out of the belief that Jesus had chosen to assume upon earth a lowly guise, an idea which was founded upon the famous passage of Isaiah (liii. 2-3)¹ in which the Servant of Jahweh is described as the meanest of men, a figure totally devoid of beauty or impressiveness. Hence it was that Justin could write that Christ "was manifested without beauty or dignity, as said Isaiah, David, and all the Scriptures", Irenæus characterizes him as *infirmitus* and *ingloriosus*, and even *indecorous*. Clement of Alexandria, arguing that true beauty is not physical, does not fail to remind us that the Lord was not beautiful in the flesh, a belief to which he several times refers. Origen improves upon it by adding that Jesus was small, ill-favoured and insignificant. Commodian, writing for the general public, declares that, on the evidence of Isaiah, he was of humble and mean appearance, and looked like a slave:

"Hunc ipsum Esaias humilem denuntiat esse
Et nimis dejectum, fuerit quasi servi figura."

Tertullian, Saint Cyprian, Hippolytus, etc., were all of the same opinion. A very early tradition goes still further, and claims that the Lord was a leper.

"The Olympian ideal of the coincidence of beauty and divinity was, however, too widely disseminated for simple-minded believers to picture Christ otherwise, and the sarcophagi often display a flattering representation of him. In order the better to convey his greatness, he is naively represented as much taller than those who are speaking to him or who surround him. There was, moreover, another passage, Psalm xlv. 2, which could be cited against that of Isaiah: "Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips." From the

¹ 'For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of the dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.'

time of Clement of Alexandria, the controversy was in full swing, and contradictory assertions abounded, with no promise of a satisfactory solution. The dispute actually lasted until the fourth and fifth centuries, with great animation on both sides, but the partisans of ugliness eventually lost ground. They numbered amongst them, indeed, Basil and Cyril of Alexandria, who did not hesitate to maintain, with his customary extravagance, that Christ was "the ugliest of the children of men"; but they had against them Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Theodoret, and all the practice of iconographic art. They were, accordingly, practically vanquished, but their defeat merely represents the triumph of Psalm xlv. over Isaiah liii., and adds nothing to our knowledge of the appearance of Jesus.'

The climax of this idealisation of his appearance is seen in Holman Hunt's picture, *The Light of the World*, in St. Paul's Cathedral, in which Jesus is shown, as Mr. Bernard Shaw once remarked, as if he were the great Lord Shaftesbury in a handsome robe, carrying an expensive lantern. Millions of Christian men and women would shudder away, as from a blasphemer, from one who reminded them that Jesus was probably dark enough in complexion to be called a black man.

LVI

'The conversion of Paul,' says Mr. Shaw in his preface to *Androcles and the Lion*, 'was no conversion at all: it was Paul who converted the religion that has raised one man above sin and death into a religion that has delivered millions of men so completely into their dominion that their own common nature became a horror to them, and the religious life became a denial of life.' It transformed the young religion, still suffering from the catastrophe of the cross and uncertain of its course. Did Paul save or destroy the Christian religion? That is the question which is still debated. It is a question which many men are now inclined to answer by going beyond Paul to his master in an effort to obtain satisfaction of their spiritual needs. We have dwelt too long on the divine in Jesus, and need now to dwell on the human.

As I stood outside the wall of Damascus and looked at the window from which Saul, newly converted into Paul, was

lowered in a basket, I wondered whether it would not have been better for Christianity and mankind if he had remained Saul and had continued to breathe threatenings and slaughterings against the disciples of the Lord. That tormented fanatic is the first mystery man of the Christian religion. In comparison with him, the life of Jesus is simple and clear: it is infinitely more attractive, though Paul, too, has his attractive side and is pathetically eager to be liked. He was a great man, but his greatness lay in his intellect and not in his soul. In that region Jesus is his master. I can best express my feeling about the two men by saying that everything I read about Jesus makes me certain that I should have been intensely happy in his company, eager to join it, reluctant to leave it, always at my ease in it, but that everything I read about Paul, while it makes me certain that I should have listened to him with the utmost respect, even when I disagreed with his opinions, convinces me that I could never have felt at home with him. I feel that I could have slapped Jesus on the back and have called him 'old chap', but that I could never have taken such a liberty with Paul.

LVII

We came away from the Wall, near to which we saw some Senegalese soldiers being trained by French officers, and went to the house of Ananias – not the liar, a very harshly-used man – but the disciple who was told in a vision to 'go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus'. Ananias was, naturally enough, afraid to obey the divine injunction. The reputation of Saul as a persecutor of members of the new sect was sufficiently widespread to give the most obedient and heroic Christian occasion for pause. But Ananias went to the house of Judas and found Saul lying there, blind from his vision and, as he had been told to do, put his hands on him and caused the scales to fall from his eyes. It was Ananias, presumably, who baptised Paul. The house of Judas is now a little mosque, but the house of Ananias has been turned into an underground chapel by the Franciscans, and here in the cool we sat for a few minutes and were thankful to be out of the glare of the sun.

The rest of the morning was wasted on a visit to a carpet and furniture factory, where we saw women and children weaving carpets, while men made those hideous boxes of inlaid ivory, which are called Oriental or Moroccan. The manufacturers tried hard to sell one to me, but I would not have taken it as a gift. The factory would be condemned as unsafe by the least exacting Factory Inspector in England, and I trod its upper floor with trepidation, feeling that at any moment it would open and drop me to the floor beneath. The women and children worked very dexterously at their carpet-making, but I was depressed by their sadness. A little girl, with lovely, melting eyes, plied her threads skilfully, though she seldom looked at what she was doing, and regarded me with an unsmiling face. At intervals she thrust a tiny hand towards me, saying '*baksheesh!*' and then continued with her labour. I did not see her smile once while I was in that ramshackle factory, nor did I see a smile on the face of any of the women or children who worked there. I suppose Near Easterners are happy in their own way, but I could wish their peculiar happiness lightened their looks with laughter. Bored and depressed by this sweat-shop, I came away, trying to persuade my companions to do the same, but the guides, who receive a commission of ten per cent on all purchases they persuade people to make, were in no mood to move until the last piastre had been screwed out of our pockets, and I was defeated. My defeat was easy, for we had a large number of junk-buyers with us, and these were resolved to clutter up their houses with all the tourists' rubbish they could find. There must be many homes in Great Britain and Ireland that are full of things that would be thrown out of Woolworth's without any hesitation. At last, however, the most insatiate curio-buyer was lugged out of that unsafe factory, and we set off for the Street called Straight; which a guide persisted in calling the Straight called Street.

I am astonished to find that all recollection of the Street has faded out of my memory, but there is an account of it in one of the letters I wrote immediately after I had passed through it. 'This is a scene out of the Arabian Nights - noisy, coloured, and extraordinarily casual. It is very narrow, straight and congested. Motor drivers do not attempt to save life here - yet no one is run over. If anyone were run over, it would be his own

fault. We bumped goats and sheep and babies impartially – and everybody was very nice about it. We knocked a fellow's barrow about, and he almost apologised for existing. Nothing here is quite what I imagined it to be. It is better and it is worse. The people are often in rags, but they do not look ill-fed, though they seem to suffer a good deal from sore eyes. They seldom smile. I get the impression of a sad people to whom some sort of oppression has become native.'

On our way back to the hotel to lunch, while passing through a narrow street, I heard a sound of young voices, and, pushing open a door, saw the playground of a school in which a noisy company of boys and girls, under the guardianship of several teachers, was disporting itself. As I gazed on the happiest sight I had seen in Damascus, the children gathered round me, shouting very cheerfully, and presently a teacher, a young woman who had, she told me, learnt English in an American College in Syria, came and offered to show me round. (Nearly every English speaker whom I met in the Near East had learnt our language in an American College. The teachers must have been excellent, for the pupils spoke English uncommonly well, although most of them, like this teacher in Damascus, had never been in England.) I was taken to the school chapel, a little tawdry, perhaps, and the children were so eager that I should see everything, and see well, that they ran about the chapel, switching on electric lights as if current were free. The school, I was told, belongs to Syriac Catholics, and its chapel was built in A.D. 863. The contrast between these smiling little Christians and the sad-eyed unsmiling little Moslems I had seen in the carpet and furniture factory, was immediate and immense. I could not have wished for a more striking illustration of the difference between Christianity and Muhammanatism than was unintentionally furnished to me that morning when, on my way from the factory to my hotel, I suddenly pushed open a door and found myself in a Christian school. I came regretfully away.

LVIII

In the afternoon Father Sir John O'Connell and I, now done with the official programme, went off, accompanied by a guide

he had discovered, who had spent many years in America, spoke English fluently, and was a very intelligent man. He had, of course, the guide's incorrigible habit of luring one into a shop, but he had to live, and that way of living is one of the least objectionable. We were taken into a sweetmeat shop, owned by a man who proudly informed me that he supplies Her Majesty Queen Mary with Turkish Delight, and, as a proof of his assertion, showed me two small and crude portraits of Her Majesty and the late King George. They were nailed above a large tin of Huntley and Palmer's mixed biscuits, and I thought it odd to find biscuits from Reading in an Eastern bazaar, although there is nothing more odd in that fact than there is in the sight of pistachios or figs in Fortnum and Mason's shop in Piccadilly. I bought a box of mixed candies and brought them to England in a fruitless effort to obtain a reputation as an epicure, addicted to strange and exotic foods. I was told the name of shops in London where these things were often purchased by those whom I sought to impress! . . .

From this shop we went to a khan of incredible age, and here, it seemed, there had been no change for two thousand years. If a farmer who had lived in a village outside Damascus at the beginning of the Christian era were to be resurrected and brought into this khan, I doubt if he would observe any change in it. Asses and camels are still stalled there, and bundles of merchandise appear to have been lying in the khan ever since it was first opened. The resurrected visitor might be puzzled by certain holes in the roof, and would feel bewildered rather than enlightened when informed that they were made by shells, but apart from these he would not feel out of place or puzzled.

We came out of the khan and contended with the shouting, shoving throng of asses, camels, men, women and children, and made our way to the house of Asad Pasha, the last Governor of Damascus, which was built in the eighteenth century, and is now a museum. We passed through a gate, which once was held by armed guards, into a charming courtyard where oranges and lemons and citrons were growing. In this courtyard eunuchs watched over three harems. The Governor and his two sons each had fifteen wives, a piece of ostentation, I thought, as well as supererogation and folly. The thought of

those forty-five women giving each other or their husbands a piece of their mind was abhorrent. The house has many rooms, the chief of which opens on to the courtyard, and about three hundred people, eunuchs, guards, servants, stablemen, in addition to the family, lived in it. It had its own Turkish baths which, however, were nothing like so ornate as those we have in England.

The belief that Oriental houses were highly luxurious dies hard. The Oriental himself is responsible for the legend, he being prompt to regard all his geese as superb swans, but I have yet to see the Eastern house which approaches in comfort and luxury the average Occidental house. The villas of Wimbledon surpass in grandeur the palaces I saw in Istanbul and Damascus. There is scarcely a commuter in Long Island who is not more handsomely housed than many pashas. Euston Station is more lavishly appointed, except in the matter of wives and eunuchs, than the palace of the last Governor of Damascus; while Central Station in New York would make Cresus speechless with wonder if he could behold it. Sir Charles Eliot, quoted by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher in *A History of Europe*, observes that the house of a Turkish gentleman in the nineteenth century contained no more furniture than could be carried off at a moment's notice on a wagon into Asia. 'The very aspect of a Turkish house seems to indicate that it is not intended for a permanent residence. The ground floor is generally occupied by stables and stores. From this a staircase, often merely a ladder, leads to an upper story, usually consisting of a long passage from which open several rooms, the entrances to which are closed by curtains and not by doors. There are probably holes in the planking of the passages and spiders' webs and swallows' nests in the rafters. The rooms themselves, however, are beautifully clean, but bare and unfurnished. . . . The general impression left on a European is that a party of travellers have occupied an old barn and said, "Let us make the place clean enough to live in; but it's no use taking any more trouble about it. We shall probably be off again in a week!"'

The palace of Asad Pasha is better found than that, and is a handsome house, but I doubt if it was ever what Europeans would call luxuriously, or even well, furnished. After the War

Asad Pasha, who was not content to remain a private citizen in a republic controlled by France, sold his house to the French, and all that excessive domesticity disappeared. One member of the family retired to the country, another to Turkey, and a third to Vienna. When I inquired what had become of the wives, for I could see social difficulties in the way of a man with fifteen wives in Vienna, the guide, shrugging his shoulders, said that the husbands had taken the prettiest with them and divorced the rest, who went about their business as best they could. The oranges and lemons and citrons now grow only for the delight of austere young men who are studying archaeology and other emotionally undisturbing matters, and the court which once resounded with the cries and reproaches and, we may hope, the laughter of concubines, now resounds with exclamations of chastened delight when a student finds a bit of an ancient bottle.

After we had left this house, Sir John and I returned to the Omayad Mosque, which we had visited the previous day, and this time we saw it to better advantage, for we were not hustled by guides, nor was the mosque full of people. The Moslem, like the Roman Catholic, is not self-conscious, as a Protestant often is, when he prays. It is immaterial to him how many spectators are present, nor is he disturbed in his devotions by the trapsings of tourists. At one place in this mosque I saw a man, as I thought, prostrating himself before one of the grandfather's clocks which Abdul the Damned ordered from England in vast numbers and stuck wherever he could find a suitable site. I saw two of them in the Omayad Mosque, one on the right and one on the left of the tomb of St. John the Baptist. But I remembered that a Moslem does not pray to anything *in* a mosque: does not, indeed, need a mosque. He turns towards Mecca, and any convenient spot will do for that. The direction of Mecca is marked by a 'niche' in a wall, adjacent to the pulpit.

As we walked round the mosque we saw twenty or thirty men in a line, making their devotions under the leadership of a man who stood about three feet in front of them. 'Who are they?' I whispered to the guide. 'Business men who could not come earlier to prayer,' he replied. How surprised we should feel if a band of bankers, underwriters and stockbrokers on their way home from Cornhill or Throgmorton Street were to pause

at St. Paul's to recite the Collect for the Day. Would they not hit the front page of the jazz journals if, delayed by the late arrival of New York prices, they went after evensong and held a service by themselves! 'Strange Sight in St. Paul's! Business Men Caught Praying! . . .' Yet I do not suppose that these devout Moslems are any more scrupulous in their affairs than careless Christians, or that their standard of business morality is higher than that of a broker at Lloyd's, who, perhaps, enters church four times in his life: once to be baptised, once to be confirmed, once to be married, and the last time to have the burial service recited over his corpse.

I turned away from these devout Moslems and saw two women prostrating themselves in a distant corner of the mosque. Women, I was told, are not encouraged to pray in public, though they may say their prayers in mosques if they particularly wish to do so, but are expected to pray unobtrusively and in corners. Moslem men, in their orisons, behave more conspicuously than women, and are not thought to be pharasaical because they call the attention of the Almighty and the general public to their piety. Women who pray in mosques are considered to be unladylike, and are, I suspect, regarded with disfavour by both sexes, but especially by their own: almost as if they were suffragettes, a lot of unmannerly, self-advertising, cranky and unsexed females. I saw two boys at play in the Omayad Mosque, close to the spot where the devout women were prostrating themselves, but no one chided them for their behaviour, nor, indeed, was there anything in it that called for chiding, unless we are to suppose that the spectacle of a playing child is displeasing to God.

The head of St. John the Baptist is said to have been buried in this mosque, and an immense domed tomb covers the place of burial. A door leads into this tomb, to which, I presume, entrance may be obtained, but no sign was made to us, on either of the occasions I visited the mosque, that entrance was obtainable. The tomb is large enough for a small service to be held in it, but whether any ever is, I do not know.

for some time by the side of the Abana river until we lost it in the Syrian desert, and made our way towards Palestine. We would cross the Jordan, which forms the frontier between Palestine and Syria, and then drive to Capernaum. In the desert itself we stopped for a short time to visit an Arab-walled village. A fouler spot I have seldom seen. Its offence, like that of Claudius, was rank and smelt to heaven. The place proliferated with snotty-nosed, sore-eyed infants who were undergoing an intensive training in the chief Arab occupation: *baksheesh* hunting. Every person in that village might justly be said to have had his own private germ breeding ground: his body; and a general germ breeding ground in his house. The odour which issued from the dark and noisome dens in which these Arabs lived was appalling, and none of our party, not even the romantics, evinced any desire to enter them. 'This sort of thing reconciles me to Council cottages,' I said to a lady by my side, and received for my Philistine opinion a most withering glance. . . . She had been reading T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, and her head was stuffed with curious blither about proud, untameable Arabs. Could looks have killed, I should have dropped dead in that dirty village: a fate that would have appalled me, for I hope for a cleaner death than that.

As we retreated, some of us very rapidly, from that midden of a place, I recalled the single occasion on which I met Lawrence: in Thomas Hardy's house; and how insignificant I had thought him. He was stationed near Dorchester at that time, and often rode over to Max Gate on a motor-bicycle. Mrs. Hardy, when she had told me he was coming, asked me not to show any sign that I knew him to be Colonel Lawrence, and not, as he wished to be called, Private – or was it Corporal? – Shaw. This affectation of humble rank, a most embarrassing affectation to the officers, especially subalterns, under whom he served, was supposed by his admirers to have some deep, almost mystical meaning. It puzzled Hardy, who wondered to me how a man of Lawrence's intellect could spend the greater part of his time in the society of men with whom he had little or nothing in common. To suppose that a scholar can live easily with people who are ignorant of the elements of his subjects, unaware even that there are such subjects to be studied, is absurd. I can think of no solitude more profound and

oppressive than that of an educated man who has to spend the larger part of his life in the company of uneducated men. Lawrence deliberately sought this society, but *why* he sought it is a mystery. It baffled Hardy, who knew him fairly well.

Lawrence came in, and we were introduced to him. Obedient to our instructions, we behaved to him as if he were Private or Corporal Shaw, and not Colonel Lawrence. Lest that statement should be misunderstood or misrepresented, I must add that there was no 'condescension' towards him. I have been a private soldier and a lance-corporal (unpaid) myself, and I do not 'condescend' to soldiers or, indeed, to any men, but even if I had been willing to stoop to such folly, my knowledge of his identity would have saved me from 'condescending' to Lawrence of Arabia. It would be a piece of inverted snobbery to pretend that I should have felt the same interest in a private soldier who was paying a visit to Thomas Hardy that I felt in the best advertised officer of the War, nor shall I pretend to be that sort of snob. If Lawrence had been, as he was pretending to be, plain Private or Corporal Shaw, without any claim to distinction, I should not have anticipated his arrival with anything like the interest I felt at the prospect of meeting the author of *Revolt in the Desert*. Mr. Bernard Shaw had tried to persuade me to part with fifty pounds as a subscriber to the first edition of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, but I had retained enough wisdom to keep my fifty pounds to myself. The fact that the attempt had been made to part me from so much money was in itself enough to rouse my interest in the author of the work, even if I had been ignorant of his romantic career.

It may be that our encounter in the presence of a man of greater genius than his, made me feel disappointed when I saw Lawrence. Great men do not always look their part. They certainly do not fulfil the novelette notion of genius. But it seems to me improbable that anybody could encounter a genius and not, sooner or later, become aware of his quality. Hardy was not an imposing figure. He was small and, in general company, silent. He sat in corners and did not, as some men habitually do, take the centre of the floor. He did not thrust himself upon people, nor did he try, by any eccentricity of dress, to draw attention to himself. A brief and casual encounter with him by people who were ignorant of his identity,

might have caused him to be overlooked: but only the most insensitive person could have stayed in his company for more than a few minutes without realising that he was a man of great quality. He had the look of a delicately-bred and benignant eagle. A single look in his eyes must have made the stupidest person feel that their owner had power. His talk was tentative – he did not lay down laws nor did he dogmatise – but it had authority. He pervaded a room without making the slightest effort to pervade it. Once, when he came to lunch with us at Weymouth, I watched the effect he made as he came into the lounge of our hotel. Everybody looked at him, though I do not think anybody but ourselves knew who he was. I recall now the remark he made as he entered the lounge and looked around him. It was a remark that any old man over eighty might make in similar circumstances, but it was one that label-lovers would call 'typically' Hardy. 'Every time I come into this hotel I think of someone who is dead,' he said to me. That morning, he had received the news of the death of a woman he had known for many years and had met in this very hotel. He was at the age when the gaps in a man's acquaintance are plainer than the remains.

It may be that my consciousness of Hardy and my deep affection for him made me feel disappointed in Lawrence. I could have cried to Hardy, as Isaiah cried to Lucifer, 'Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?' Mr. Vyvyan Richards, in his *Portrait of T. E. Lawrence*, says of his hero:

"Take the heart of St. Francis or Lincoln, join it to the mind of Leonardo da Vinci and the driving will of Stonewall Jackson; set them in the body of an anchorite or a Steffansen; add the artful resource of all men of wiles from Odysseus to Sven Hedin and the tongue of a Shakespearean Conrad; stir all this into a wild old desert people on the warpath, and then you might get – *Revolt in the Desert*. But to get the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* you are bound to bring in Lawrence himself; for without him there is no troubled Hamlet to this great play. The *Seven Pillars* is the mirror of his unique nature, and the story of its discontent."

This is extremely high praise, and might even be called hysterical praise. The man to whom it is given ought surely to have been more obviously great than he looked? Although

he had demanded that his identity should not be divulged to Hardy's guests, an impossible demand to make on any human being, he became restive on finding himself treated as he had desired to be treated. In a little while he was allowing us all to know that he was not an ordinary private soldier, but a man who had had his portrait painted by Augustus John. He dropped hints of a mysterious career! . . .

Lawrence was an unusual person, but I wonder if we have not over-rated him as we have certainly over-rated his book. The evidence of professional soldiers will not weigh heavily with literary men, who start off with the assumption that a professional soldier must be a fool, but if they are ready to call in support of their theory that Lawrence was a man of supreme genius the evidence of those professional soldiers who praise Lawrence, they must be prepared to accept criticism as well as praise of their hero. Lawrence had behind him the wealth and strength of the British Empire. Could he have done what he did if he had not been able to shovel out sovereigns to his Arabs as freely as if they were O.B.E.'s? All professional soldiers are not agreed on Lawrence's ability, though none of them denies that he had much. Many of them strenuously deny that he was the genius literary men acclaim him to have been, and some go so far as to say he was lucky. To be lucky is sometimes a characteristic of genius, but may we not believe that part of the Lawrence legend is due to the fact that, in an age of machinery and mass production and proletarian politics, each of us is longing for a hero, for a man of highly individualistic character, and that Lawrence was lucky in his chance to fill that role? Our instincts rebel against the pseudo democratic effort to reduce us all to the same level, and our hearts are exhilarated by the spectacle of someone thrusting himself out of the ruck and making himself conspicuous. Lawrence fulfilled the romantic desires of multitudinous hearts which, for that reason, are ready to believe him greater than, perhaps, he was.

It is this ineradicable love of heroes which will preserve the world from communism. Mr. Shaw, in one of his prefaces, remarks that 'it is always hard for superior wits to understand the fury roused by their exposure of the stupidities of comparative dullards', and he goes on to say that 'it is not so easy for mental giants who neither hate nor intend to injure their

fellows to realise that nevertheless their fellows hate mental giants and would like to destroy them, not only enviously because the juxtaposition of a superior wounds their vanity, but quite humbly and honestly because it frightens them. Fear will drive men to any extreme; and the fear inspired by a superior being is a mystery which cannot be reasoned away.'

Mr. Shaw seems to me here to be stating considerably less than the truth. There are pygmies who detest because they envy but cannot emulate, giants; but they are in a tiny minority in their class: the overwhelming majority of small men and women like to think there are bigger men and women than themselves. Equality would prevail if the mob could be persuaded to believe in it. But the mob likes and longs for heroes and fairy princes. Its most common cry is for A Man. It will enlist under a Dictator more readily than it will vote for a democratic leader. (Mr. Shaw himself is fascinated by dictators. Any dictator will do for him, Ataturk, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin or Al Capone!) Herodotus tells us that Periander acquired his policy of repressing and destroying able men among his subjects from Thrasybulus of Miletus. He sent a deputy to the sage to solicit advice on the best means of establishing himself in authority. Thrasybulus said nothing, but led the deputy through a cornfield, and as they passed along he slashed and cut down all the high and heavy stalks he saw. Shakespeare may have remembered that story when he made the Gardener in *Richard II.* say to his assistants:

‘Go thou, and like an executioner,
Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,
That look too lofty in our commonwealth:
All must be even in our government.’

The mob has never admired that policy. It may like to see the mighty put down from their seats, but only because it wishes to see the humble and meek exalted. The crowd wants to see somebody *up*, and I doubt myself if it is as keen as the Magnificat asserts on seeing the insignificant and unassuming persons in power. It loves ceremonial and is unwilling to miss a sight. It may give lip-service to the king in a bowler hat, but it prefers to see him in a topper. The workman takes his children to St. James's Palace to see the Changing of the Guard:

he does not take them to the offices of the League of Nations Union to see the Secretariat assembling. His infants, when they ask him to tell them a story, want to hear about the Fairy Princess: they do not want to hear about the Trade Union Leader. The Communist's little boy does not climb on to his father's knee crying, 'Oh, daddy, do read to me out of *Das Capital!* I do love dear Karl Marx so!' The Russian Bolsheviks have introduced fairy tales again into their schools, and are restoring ranks to the army. Officers will have brighter uniforms than privates. The privileged class is now officially recognised! . . . Lawrence caused no stir when he was at Cambridge: he excited the imagination of the world when he became a sheik in Arabia. But he did us all a disservice when he set us sentimentalising about Arabs.

LX

We drove away from the walled village in the Syrian desert, up to the Jordan, a narrow, muddy, noisy stream, and no sort of a river at all. Naaman was right: Abana is a better river than Jordan. So is the Lagan by whose banks I was born. The Thames and the Hudson, the Seine and Tiber, the Mississippi and the Missouri, the St. Lawrence and the Amazon, the Tyne, the Tees and the Tay, the Taw and the Torridge, the Volga, the Rhine and the Rhone – all these are infinitely better rivers than the Jordan; nor would I swop the river Axe, which flows at the foot of the hill on which I live, for all its water.

We came first to the police post on the Syrian side of the river, where we found ourselves in the presence of British bobbies, and felt at home at once. I had a reprehensible desire to give three rousing cheers on seeing them, but, remembering how scornful the Bloomsbury Bolshies can be of anybody who lets a squeak of pride in his country out of him, I repressed the desire and pretended to be as phlegmatic and unemotional as the police themselves. We might have been Bedouins for all the interest they showed in us. They might have been traffic cops in Piccadilly Circus, so little excitement did they display at seeing a large party of their countrymen and women come rushing up from the Syrian Desert to the Jordan! . . . No fuss, no gesticulation, no shouting, no sudden rages that die down

as quickly as they rise; not even a word of greeting, nothing but quiet and quick examination. It is not natural, this silence in exciting circumstances, and I missed the cheery humour of the Cockney. There ought to have been a bit of banter! . . .

We crossed the Jordan. I had expected to be thrilled by this experience, but was not. It is the most famous river in the world. Its name is familiar in our mouths as household words, known to us as soon as we knew the name of our own river. I knew the name of the Jordan long before I knew the name of the Liffey, though not quite so soon as I knew the name of the Boyne. Royal infants are baptised with its water, brought in bottles as carefully as if it were the elixir of life. In this river Jesus was immersed by the Baptist! . . . I felt no emotion at all as I went over the bridge which spans it: I might have been crossing the Wandle. It disappointed me as much as the Atlantic Ocean disappointed Oscar Wilde.

But if the Jordan disappointed, Galilee filled me with elation. To come out of the burnt up, barbaric beauty of the Syrian desert into the green and gentle beauty of Galilee is to undergo an extraordinary experience. Mr. Morton had shaken his head when I told him how I was to enter Palestine. I was taking the wrong direction. I ought to go first to Jerusalem, and then to Nazareth, Tiberias and Capernaum. But I am certain that I took the right direction. Judea, he said, is brutal: Galilee is kind; and the visitor had better get over the brutality at the beginning. But I saw the story of Jesus unfold itself in the physical contours of his country: his life and his labour, his spirit and his death were fixed in its geography. I was reading the story in the right order; from the beginning, through the middle, to the end.

Mr. Morton tells his readers how lovely Palestine is with wild-flowers, but adds his conviction that it is no lovelier in this respect than England in spring and, indeed, he is right. Nowhere in the world have I seen such a royal procession of uncultured flowers as I see every spring in the lanes about my house: primroses and daffodils, cowslips and campions, stars of Bethlehem and bluebells or wild hyacinths, foxgloves and honeysuckle, violets and 'white-leafed, frail anemones', as Matthew Arnold calls them; all these and others blow about our Devon lanes, unchecked and uncontrolled and beautiful.

I recall a morning when, on my way to Exeter, I looked up and saw a copse floating in a blue mist of bluebells. The wild-flowers come and bloom and fade and perish, and revive again when spring returns. Punctually every year they perform their miracle, and battalion after battalion passes through the hedges in ceremonial parade, each battalion keeping its distance and proudly marching in line. There are no gaps, no straggling ranks, no slovenly steps, no dirty buttons, only a gracious deployment across a green parade.

But the wild-flowers of Galilee seemed unsurpassably lovely because we had come out of the barren beauty of the Syrian desert. There were millions of lovely little flowers on each side of the road: red anemones, which Jesus called the lilies of the field and asked us to consider how they grew, and red poppies; dark blue flowers and others so faintly blue that they seemed to be white; and a very beautiful and profuse flower whose name no one could tell me, a flower with yellow petals folded thickly together. Its colour was as delicate as primrose yellow, but it was more defined. . . . Are not words the very devil? When we want them to do a job and describe exactly what we have seen, they buck and jib and turn obstinate, inadequate and clumsy. They will not say sufficiently what we wish them to say. It must be enough, therefore, if I say that Galilee is made lovely and gentle and kind in March by green hills and wild-flowers of every colour. It evoked in me an emotion I had not felt for a long time: a feeling of religious reverence.

LXI

I shall not soon, if ever, forget my first view of the Sea of Galilee and of Nazareth. A road had been cut through a green hill, and looking along this road I suddenly saw, deeply blue, the Sea. Certain emotions must stir the minds of people who have been brought up in the Christian religion, even if they have abandoned it or have, like me, greatly modified their beliefs; and these people will experience a thrill at the sight of Nazareth and the Galilean Sea which may never have been experienced by those who were born in Palestine and have lived there all their lives. I doubt if any Palestinian Jew or Arab

feels so much emotion on coming to Tiberias and embarking on the Sea as is felt by a Christian who comes from a distant country and may never visit it again. My friend, Mr. W. A. Colegate, whom I had met on this journey after a lapse of twenty-five years in our encounters, confessed to me, as I confessed to him, that he was strangely moved by the mere fact that we were in Palestine. Our upbringing came rushing upon us, and all the lore we had learnt in our childhood surged into our recollection with irresistible force.

I remember once hearing Mr. Lloyd George say that he knew the names of the kings of Israel long before he knew the names of the kings of England, and there must be multitudes of middle-aged and elderly men and women throughout Great Britain and Ireland who can say much the same, though I doubt if many people under the age of thirty-five have more than the most superficial acquaintance with the Bible. A girl of thirty stared at me in astonishment when she heard me dictate a reference to Jesus' statement that it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. She had been educated at High Wycombe, but had never until that moment, so far as she could recollect, heard the comparison. Another girl, as expensively educated as she, told me that until the outbreak of the Italo-Abyssinian War, she had not known that there was a real place called Abyssinia. 'What did you think it was?' I inquired. 'Oh, one of those places in the Bible,' she said. Abyssinia, in fact, is not mentioned in the Bible except under the name of Ethiopia. This ignorance seems to me unfortunate on historical grounds alone. Our life and social system is so closely knit with the history of Palestine that to be ignorant of the latter is to be ignorant of our own.

I felt myself profoundly moved by the fact that I was driving down a road in Palestine and that there, through that gap in a green hill, I could see the blue waters of Galilee. I was passing through my childhood, discovering a physical basis for all the beliefs I had been taught that there was an actual, if disappointing, Jordan; an actual Sea of Galilee on which fishermen still sail, in which they still catch fish very much as boats were sailed and fish were caught when Jesus, new from his baptism and sojourn in the wilderness, came to Capernaum

and called Simon and Andrew from their nets and their kindred, and then, a moment or two later, called James and John from the boat in which they were mending nets with their father Zebedee.

My imagination is such that when I see an historic spot I become intensely conscious of the people who made it historic, and almost expect to see them turning a corner. If Socrates had appeared at the door of his prison while I gazed at it, I should have felt no surprise: I was astonished that he did not appear. To find myself in an actual Nazareth, even although it is not exactly on the site of the Nazareth of the New Testament, in an actual Bethlehem and Jericho, a Garden of Gethsemane and a Mount of Olives, on the shores of the Dead Sea, at a place where a Calvary had been — was to find myself peering into Oriental faces and asking, under my breath, 'Are you Peter?' 'Did you see him?'

There may be men and women in these villages and towns who are directly descended from some of the Apostles. Jesus had four brothers, James, Joses, Juda and Simon, and at least two sisters. They may have perpetuated themselves unto our own time. It was not, I thought, an absurd fancy that I might meet some man or woman in this country in whose veins flowed the blood that had been shed on Calvary. Simon, called Peter, was a married man, living with his mother-in-law, when he was called by Jesus. It is unlikely that this virile man begat no children. A brood of babies may have been left behind when the band of apostles followed their Lord around the shores of this lake, and the child which stopped to look at me when I passed by, the young man who begged me to buy postcards or Bibles bound in olive wood, may have been born of apostolic stock. There were infants in Nazareth or round about who, when Jesus approached, could pluck the hem of his garment and call him 'uncle'.

I heard someone inquire of another, 'Are you staying at Nazareth or Tiberias to-night?' and was imaginatively overcome by my knowledge that I was going that night to Nazareth to sleep. A place which had been a name in a book had become an actual place. I had risen from a familiar story and found it a fact.

LXII

I came to the Sea of Galilee at Capernaum which, according to the guide who told us of the Straight called Street, was the place where Jesus cured the daughter of the sanatorium. It was here that the short, but tremendous, ministry was begun. Capernaum was a place of importance: a frontier town with a customs-house, and the centre of a famous wheat-belt. The whole of Galilee, Josephus says, 'was under cultivation and seemed to be one great garden'. There is a grotesque legend, much favoured by shallow-minded anti-Semites, that the Jews are entirely urban in character and have no capacity for cultivating the soil. Circumstances compelled them to become urban, just as circumstances compel Irishmen and women, born and bred on farms at home, to become urbanised in America, but there is nothing inherently antipathetic to agriculture in the Jews' nature, as the briefest perusal of the Bible and the most casual acquaintance with their history should be sufficient to show. 'In the period of the Second Temple,' says Joseph Klausner in his erudite and exhaustive work, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 'the Jew proved himself a skilful agriculturalist:

'He knew how to prepare the soil, manure it and clear it of stones and thorns. He was accustomed to terrace hills and valleys so that the "sweeping rains" (Proverbs xxviii. 3), so violent in the Palestinian winter, should not wash away the thin layer of soil off the rocks, and he knew how to practise irrigation by means of cisterns, wells and canals. In a normal season, the Judean farmer reaped fivefold from a normal soil, while with good season and from fruitful soil he reaped as much as a hundredfold. . . . In ordinary years, if we take no account of droughts, Palestine produced bread enough not only for its population but even for exportation. Besides grain crops (wheat, barley, spelt, oats, rye, millet and even rice, which had been brought from the east and acclimatised), the country was rich in vegetables (cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, gourds, onions, garlic, radishes, rape-seed, lettuce, lentils, beans, peas, and acclimatised vegetables like melons, artichokes, orach, lupine, asparagus, Egyptian beans, Egyptian and Greek gourd-fruit), which provided the bulk of the ordinary food for the poorer classes; while Palestine was especially rich in fruit (grapes, olives, figs, pomegranates, charobs, citrons, cherries, plums, nuts, almonds, dates, mulberries, apples, pears,

apricots, quinces, and acclimatised fruits like crustumenian pears, peaches and medlars).... The Jews were also sheep-herds, cow-herds and cattlemen, and Jerusalem had a special "cattle-market". The name "Tyropæan" (cheese-market) proves that they were dairymen too.... Hunters were few, but fishermen were numerous, especially in Galilee....'

It is plain from Dr. Klausner's chapter on Economic Conditions in Palestine that the population was large and exceedingly diversified in its occupations. 'We find,' he says, 'almost contemporary with Jesus, mention of no less than forty kinds of craftsmen in Jewish literature.' But the Bible itself, and especially the Old Testament, is sufficient refutation of the grotesque libel that the Jew cannot cultivate the earth. The most familiar analogies, illustrations, and parables used by Jesus prove that he was brought up in an agricultural country, although he himself and his father, Joseph, were carpenters. Their occupation brought them into familiar contact with farmers, for they made goads and ploughs not much, if any, different from those that the traveller sees in Palestine and Syria to-day.

Capernaum was a busy town when Jesus began his ministry there: busy not only with its own traffic, but, because of its position as a frontier town, busy with exports and imports. It was about fifteen miles from Nazareth, the distance from Charing Cross to Croydon, and less than the distance from New York to Coney Island; just far enough for Jesus not to have any relatives there. He could work in this town without personal entanglements. The fact is important, for it is clear that he had been encumbered by his family from which, during his ministerial life, he was estranged.

A student of Christianity, new to his subject and eager to understand the doctrines that have encrusted themselves upon it, must feel puzzled by the veneration paid to Mary, the mother of Jesus, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, where it sometimes seems to surpass the reverence paid to Jesus himself. If anything is clear from the Gospels, it is plain that Jesus did not get on with his relations and that he had as little as possible to do with them after his baptism. Of all the concomitants of Christianity, mariolatry has the smallest foundation. The references to Mary in the gospels are few, and all the

references to her and her children during the evangelistic life of Jesus show him in a relationship to her which may justly be called antipathetic on both sides. When he came to Nazareth with his disciples, his own received him not. 'Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.' Mark does not tell us whether Jesus attempted to visit his mother on this occasion, although the last words in the quotation, 'among his own kin, and in his own house' appear to denote that he did and that he was repulsed. He departed from Nazareth without renewing the attempt.¹ There was actually an occasion when his family upset by the news that crowds followed him wherever he went, tried to have him arrested on the ground that he was out of his mind. The incident is recorded by Mark (iii. 21) but not by the other Synoptics or by John. Mark says, 'And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold of him; for they said, He is beside himself.' Dr. James Moffatt in *A New Translation of the Bible*, a work which should be possessed by everybody, gives a closer translation of the Greek phrase:

οἱ παρ' αὐτῷ
αρατῆσαι αὐτόν
ὅτι ἐξέστη

when he translates the passage in the following terms: 'And when his family heard this, they set out to get hold of him, for what they said was, "He is out of his mind." ' In another translation the word 'kindred' is used.

The efforts were defeated because of the throng which surrounded Jesus, but later in the day, when he had gone indoors, Mary and her sons sent into the house for him. It was then that he treated her and his brothers with indifference amounting almost to contempt. 'Who is my mother, or my brethren?' he replied, an answer which must have shocked those who heard it, for family feeling is strong among the Jews. 'And he looked round about on them . . . and said, Behold my mother and

¹ The story is told in Matthew xiii. 55-57, and in Mark vi. 3-4. It is not mentioned by Luke, but John has a reference to it in iv. 44.

my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.'¹ We are not told whether he obeyed the request of his mother and his brothers that he should go out and speak to them. We do not know whether he ever saw her or any other member of her family again. None of the Synoptics mention them thereafter, and it is only the Fourth Gospel, in a passage that is said to have been interpolated, that we are told that his mother was present at the Crucifixion. The story places the author of this Gospel in an agreeable light, a light in which he appears in his account of the Trial of Jesus, xviii. 15-16, where he is obviously the disciple who, he says, was present in the palace of the high priest, a fact, if it be one, which has singularly escaped the notice of the Synoptics. In his story of the Crucifixion, he describes himself as 'the disciple standing by, whom Jesus loved'. There were also present, he states, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, Mary the wife of Cleophas and the maternal aunt of Jesus, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus, who had been hanging on the cross for some time and must have been in extreme pain and exhaustion, saw his mother and John together, he said to her, 'Woman, behold thy son!' and then, turning to John, said, 'Behold thy mother!' 'And from that hour,' John remarks, 'that disciple took her into his own home.' I have already mentioned the legend that he carried her to Ephesus where she is reputed to have died.

There is not one word about this bequest of a son to Mary and of a mother to John in Matthew, Mark or Luke. Mark mentions among the women who stood afar off while Jesus was being crucified, a woman called Mary, 'the mother of James and Joses' (xv. 40), who, with Mary Magdalene, 'beheld where he was laid' (xv. 47). Matthew (xxvii. 56) also mentions this woman. Neither of them, however, refers to her as the mother of Jesus. It is true that Jesus had two brothers called James and Joses or Joseph, but these were common names in Israel, as they are common names in England, and the majority of the women with whom Jesus was associated seem to have been called Mary. If this Mary, the mother of James and Joses, were the mother of Jesus, surely the fact would have been

¹ The story is told with slight variations, in Matthew xii. 46-50; Mark iii. 31-35, and Luke viii. 19-21.

mentioned by the Synoptics? We know nothing of Jesus' brother Joses, except that he existed. Can we suppose that Mark would have written, 'And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid' (xv. 47) if he had been referring to the mother of Jesus? Is it not as sure as anything under the sun, that if this Mary had been the Lord's mother, Mark would have worded that verse, 'And Mary Magdalene and Mary his mother' (or 'the mother of Jesus') 'beheld where he was laid'?

We have other reasons for supposing that John's account of the 'adoption' at the cross is intended for his own glorification or is an interpolation by some other hand. Why should Jesus bequeath his mother to John when she already had three sons and at least two daughters who were, presumably, fit and willing to look after her? We cannot believe that James, who became a convert to Christianity after the execution of Jesus, and a leader of the church in Jerusalem important enough to be visited by Paul, neglected his mother. The whole Johannine story seems a remarkably implausible invention. It is much more likely that Jesus ceased to have any communication with his family after his mother and brethren attempted to have him restrained as a lunatic, and that they were unaware of his execution until some time after it had occurred. Nazareth, where they lived, is over sixty miles from Jerusalem, a three days' journey in the time of Jesus, and it is impossible to believe that news of the trial and execution of Jesus, both of which were rushed through in less than fifteen hours, could have reached his mother in time for her to be brought to Calvary to see him suspended on the cross. The Johannine story is only credible on the assumption that Mary was living in Jerusalem when Jesus was arrested, but there is no evidence of this anywhere in the New Testament.

It is significant of his attitude of mind towards his family that Jesus throughout his evangelistic life constantly referred to a father's, but seldom to a mother's love. Too much can be made of this fact, but when it is added to the brusqueness with which Jesus habitually spoke to, or of, his mother, it indicates an estrangement from his family, and especially from his mother, that amounts almost to dislike. The whole relationship of Mary and her son is irreconcilable with the legend of a

Virgin Birth and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary herself and of the general adoration of her as the Mother of God.

Why, we may wonder, was Jesus so rude to Mary? Even John, so prompt to sentimentalise their relations, admits that he treated her at the Marriage Feast at Cana with a roughness that was unusual in him. This story is told only in the Fourth Gospel. It describes an incident which appears to have occurred three days after the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. The Gospeller's account of events in this chapter is such as might be made by a reporter who has listened carelessly to a story and has mixed his dates. He takes Jesus from the Jordan to Cana and then sends him to Capernaum with 'his mother and his brethren', where they continued 'not many days', for, the feast of the Passover being 'at hand . . . Jesus went up to Jerusalem' where he drove the money-changers and dealers in cattle and doves out of the Temple! . . . But the Purging of the Temple occurred much later in his evangelistic life, according to the Synoptics, than the time assigned to it in the Fourth Gospel.

There was a shortage of wine at the marriage feast at Cana. 'And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee?' and adds an apparently irrelevant remark, 'mine hour is not yet come'. The reply to his mother is bewildering to those who have been brought up in the belief that Jesus was not only divinely conceived by his mother, but that he was actually God, and that Mary knew he was God. Could the Son of God have displayed petulance to her who was blessed among women because she had given him birth?

LXIII

Legends are thick about the Holy Family. The Jews, provoked by the doctrine of a Virgin Birth, invented one which every respectable Jew now repudiates. Mary, they said, was seduced by a Roman soldier, Pantheras or Pandera. Jesus was their son. Mary herself has been grossly traduced to the extent of being called a public prostitute. There was even a libel, spread by an Alexandrian story-teller, that Mary had com-

mitted incest with her brother, and that Jesus was the son of his uncle. It was perhaps inevitable that disbelievers in the Christian religion should defame the Family when they heard what extraordinary claims were made for it by the Christians, but the evil was greater than its occasion. These libels and slanders have persisted, in one form or another, to our own times. A German rationalist, Paulus, published his belief that 'the ambitious *Priesterfrau, Elizabeth*,' the mother of the Baptist, to whom Mary paid a mysterious visit about the time of her betrothal to Joseph, played a trick on Mary by persuading an unknown man to pretend to be the angel Gabriel! . . . Jesus was the offspring of that ruse. Infertile women in India still go to temples to be made fruitful through the agency of God, and Paulus, presumably, based his theory on the Eastern custom.¹ But are these slanders and libels, invented by professed enemies of the Christian faith, any worse than the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which horribly implies that the Holy Spirit, having first committed adultery with Anne, by whom he begot a daughter, Mary, subsequently committed incest with his daughter and begot a son? Extravagant claims evoke extravagant refutations. The belief that Jesus was of Gentile paternity pervades the Hitler perversion of Christianity, and is derived from Houston Chamberlain, among other authors. A German professor recently published a 'proof' that Jesus was a pure Aryan, born near Frankfort. It allows a good German Christian to batter in the brains of a Jew without any appearance of inconsistency.

Among the Early Christians there was a legend which is to be found in the *Protevangelium Jacobi*, one of the earliest works to be placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*: it was written in the second century. This work was the basis on which two subsequent works, *Liber de infantia Mariae et Christis salvatoris* and *Evangelium de nativitate Mariae*, were founded.² According to these works, Mary was the daughter of a Judean shepherd,

¹ *Jesus*, by Ch. Guignebert. p. 127.

² A summary of these apocryphal works will be found in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, eleventh edition, under Mary (Vol. 17, page 812), and in *The Life of St. John the Baptist* by a French Roman Catholic priest, Father Denis Buzy, which has been translated into English by Father J. M. T. Barton. The most important English work on the subject is *The Apocryphal New Testament*, by M. R. James.

named Joachim, and of his wife, Anne or Anna, who, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist, had long been childless when their first infant was born. There is a remarkable identity of circumstances between the birth of Mary and that of her son, Jesus, and the birth of the Baptist. Each birth was angelically and separately announced to each parent. The parents of Mary and of John were very old and had long been infertile when their first child was born. All the parents were particularly pious – Zacharias was a priest and assiduous in the performance of his duties – and each of the children, Mary, John and Jesus, was precociously devout. Mary's piety was such that at the early age of three, says the Book of James, she was placed in the Temple-annexe, where she remained until she was twelve, the age her son was when he was found there discoursing with the doctors. She received food 'from the hand of an angel'.

Temple girls, on reaching the age of nubility, which was twelve, were each placed by the priests under the tutelage of a respectable widower, lest they should defile the sanctuary of the Lord, and the Book of James asserts that while the question of finding a guardian-husband for Mary was being considered an angel appeared to Zacharias, who may have been the future father of the Baptist, although he is described as the high priest which Zacharias was not – he was a minor priest – and commanded him to bring all the widowers together, so that one of them might be chosen for Mary. Why this angelic instruction should have been considered necessary when the normal procedure was already being employed does not appear, but the upshot of the whole business was that Joseph, an elderly widower with a family, was appointed to be Mary's guardian-husband. The appointment appeared likely to end in scandal, for soon after it was made Mary became pregnant. Joseph and she were hauled before the high priest to explain her pregnancy, but both asserted that they were innocent of all connexion, nor does it appear that Mary was able to account for her condition. They were tried with 'the water of the ordeal of the Lord', which is described in the Book of Numbers v. and acquitted of fornication. This legend, however, has been rejected from the Christian hagiology, and the *Protevangelium Jacobi*, or Book of James, is Indexed.

The birth of the Baptist,¹ which preceded that of Jesus by six months, was so unlikely to occur that when it was angelically announced to Zacharias, he was incredulous and, as a punishment for his disbelief in the divine ability to make barren women fruitful even in their old age – Sarah, it will be recalled, giggled behind a door when she heard God telling Abraham that she, then round about ninety, would shortly become a mother – was stricken with dumbness which lasted until his son was born and circumcised and named. It is not known exactly what was the relationship between Elizabeth and Mary. St. Luke (i. 36) describes them as cousins, but the Greek word translated in the Authorised version as 'cousin' is properly translated as 'kinswoman', according to Father Buzy, and is so translated by Dr. James Moffatt. It is said by some authorities that Elizabeth was Mary's maternal aunt, and the difference in their ages would indicate that they were aunt and niece, but Hippolytus of Thebes claimed that they were first cousins, daughters of two sisters. 'According to him, the priest Nathan had three daughters, Mary, Sobbe, and Anne, of whom Sobbe settled at Bethlehem, and was the mother of S. Elisabeth, while Anne married in Galilee and became the mother of Our Lady. Hence Mary and Elizabeth were first cousins and their children, Jesus and John, were second cousins.' The probability, however, is that Elizabeth was Mary's maternal aunt, and that relationship is actually stated in a Persian translation of the New Testament.

When Elizabeth was six months gone with child, she suddenly received a visit from her young niece, Mary, then resident in Nazareth, who had discovered herself to be pregnant. Father Buzy, whose mind is difficult to follow at this point, asserts that Joseph himself, who had been left behind at Nazareth, 'had not been informed of the great event', nor was he informed of it, apparently, until about three months later;

¹ Father Buzy says, 'It is certain that S. John was about six months older than Christ. It would seem, though this is less certain, that Our Lord's birth took place in the year 749 A.U.C., i.e., from the foundation of the city of Rome, or in the year 5 B.C.' He adds that 'the Incarnation of the Word', that is to say, the Conception of Jesus, 'took place in March of the year 749, or in 5 B.C. Hence, S. John's conception should be placed in the second half of 748, that is in September or October of the year 6 B.C. There seems to be no means of arriving at any more exact solution of the problem'. *The Life of St. John the Baptist*, pages 26-37.

for Father Buzy suggests that Mary stayed with her aunt until after the Baptist was born. He bases his belief on St. Luke's statement (i. 56) that 'Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house'. It is unlikely that Mary would leave her aunt's house immediately before the baby was born. Why, we may pardonably wonder, did Mary take the long and tiring journey from Nazareth to 'Ain-Kârim, the village five miles west of Jerusalem where the Baptist is believed to have been born. This young and newly-pregnant girl left her elderly husband, neglecting to tell him that she had conceived a child, and accompanied a caravan some sixty or seventy miles across mountainous country, blistered by great heat and thick with dust, to consult an old aunt with whom she could seldom have had communication at any time, and with whom, in recent years of her life, she probably had none. Many conjectures are possible, but all of them must remain conjectures.

Eight days after his birth, the future Baptist was circumcised and, in dramatic circumstances, named John. Immediately after the name was pronounced Zacharias, who had been dumb for over nine months, recovered his speech. A few days later, it is supposed, Mary returned across the mountains to Nazareth where, about six months later, she was delivered of her first child. It does not appear that Jesus and John met until the morning of the baptism in the Jordan. Legends about the Baptist are as thick and often as absurd as those which surround his cousin Mary's family. The author of the *Protevangelium Jacobi* nonsensically asserts that the Baptist, while still at the breast, was transported to the wilderness, where he remained until he began his ministry. But it seems certain that his home at 'Ain-Kârim was broken up early in his life by the death of his aged parents - there is no suggestion in the New Testament that Joseph and Mary, when they took Jesus up to Jerusalem, paid a visit to her relations at 'Ain-Kârim, so that their young son might become acquainted with his slightly older cousin - and it may be that he was under religious instruction in some Temple school until, of his own accord, he withdrew into the desert and there sought that peculiar communion with God which has characterised the wishes of the anchorite throughout history. At all events, we know that the Baptist did not recognise his cousin Jesus when the latter presented himself for immersion

in the Jordan, nor did either man ever acknowledge their blood relationship.

John is thought to have begun his revival meetings in the Ghôr or valley of the Jordan in the autumn of A.D. 27. It appears to have been immensely successful. 'By the beginning of the following year, A.D. 28,' says Father Buzy, 'it might be said with but little exaggeration that all Palestine was on its way to the Ghôr,' a statement not more exaggerated than would be one which proclaimed that all Wales was on its way to hear Mr. Evan Roberts, when, about two decades ago, he began a great revival in the Principality. On January 6, A.D. 28, according to a tradition of the Eastern Churches, Jesus was baptised by his cousin on the right or west bank of the Jordan in the neighbourhood of Qasr el Yehoud, about five miles from Jericho: the place where, also according to tradition, the Israelites entered the Promised Land. The rest of the story of the Baptist's life is familiar. He was younger, when Herod had him beheaded, than Jesus was at the time of the Crucifixion by, perhaps, a year or, at the outside, two years. The cousins, equally called by vocation to become evangelists, died young and died by the violence of law. But not before each had sent a wave of belief swirling through their country which eventually overflowed its limits and poured across the world. The story, despite the legends in which it lies concealed, is simple and sufficient. We might have been spared all the invention, ingenious, grotesque or obscene, if our religious intellectuals throughout the ages had been content to believe that a young workman born naturally and legally in Nazareth, had displayed so much wisdom and fineness of spirit that he seemed divine. For it must be noted that all these legends were spun, not by simple, superstitious peasants, but by the intellectuals of their time because they could not accept a natural fact, but must invent a supernatural romance. The whole of Christianity is cluttered with the fantastic inventions of erudite doctors. The common man and woman would readily have believed that a working man aspired to sovereignty over souls and that, in spite of persecution and a most cruel death, he won that sovereignty; but so simple a story as that was not enough for the intellectuals who had to have miraculous occurrences and were bold enough to invent them.

LXIV

There is a general agreement that Joseph probably died while the majority of his children were still unable to support themselves, and I imagine that Jesus, the eldest child and son, who had always felt a strong wish to lead the life of an evangelist, found himself frustrated by his mother from fulfilling his wish. There is nothing remarkable in his disputation with the doctors in the Temple at the age of twelve. Precocious and pious children are common in all ages. St. Thomas Aquinas became an oblate in the abbey of Monte Cassino at the age of five, and embarrassed the monks by continually inquiring 'What is God?' Catherine Booth, the wife of the Founder of the Salvation Army, read the Bible assiduously in her infancy, speculating at great length on the state of her soul, and was a temperance advocate at the age of twelve, at which age she had strong views on the subject of Catholic Emancipation! A quick-witted lad of twelve might well have interested and even astonished learned men by his questions in the synagogue, although we can scarcely believe that they were confounded by him or that they regarded him as anything else but a promising boy who might become an excellent rabbi.

John Stuart Mill knew the Greek alphabet and a long list of Greek words, with their English equivalents, when he was three years old. Before he was eight he had read Aesop's *Fables*, Xenophon's *Anabasis*, and the whole of Herodotus, and was acquainted with Lucian, Diogenes, Laertius, Isocrates and six dialogues of Plato, and had read Robertson's histories, Hume, Gibbon, Robert Watson's *Philip II.* and *Philip III.*, Hooke's *Roman History*, part of a translation of Rollin's *Ancient History*, Langhorne's *Plutarch*, Burnet's *History of Our Own Times*, thirty volumes of the *Annual Register*, Millar's *Historical View of the English Government*, Mosheim's *Eccllesiastical History*, McGrie's *Knox*, and two histories of the Quakers. He began to learn Latin, Euclid and algebra when he was eight, at which age he was educating the younger members of his family. By the time he was ten he could read Plato and Demosthenes with ease. He studied scholastic logic when he was twelve, reading Aristotle's logical treatises in the original. A year later he started to study

political economy, reading for that purpose Adam Smith and Ricardo. Had this unfortunate child entered Westminster Abbey and engaged the Dean and Chapter in argument, it is probable that they would have felt immense astonishment at his erudition. It is equally probable that they would have felt horrified by it.

It is possible that Jesus never liked his mother, giving all his affection to his father. The report of his answer to her when, returning to Jerusalem to find him and, after a search lasting for three days, she discovered him in the Temple, 'sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking questions', does not sound like the reply of a child who feels affection for his mother. The story sounds untrue. Luke alone tells it, and he wrote only from hearsay. We cannot suppose that this lad of twelve spent four days in the Temple, arguing with erudite doctors, without one of them inquiring who his parents were and where was his home. A dozen questions spring to one's tongue when reading this legend. How did the boy manage about meals? Had he any money? Where did he sleep? Did nobody notice that a little lad with a provincial accent was hanging about the Temple without visible means of subsistence? . . .

But the story, though it does not bear examination, indicates that Jesus was one of those children who have a natural bent for religion, and we may imagine him animated throughout his reasoning life with an intense desire to become an evangelist. He was probably encouraged in this desire by his father, an elderly man married to a young wife and full of that ambition and pride in a clever son which serious-minded workmen, denied the chance to rise themselves, ardently desire for their able children. The father and the son were often together in their workshop — Nazareth was renowned for its carpenters and wood-sawyers as Sheffield is for its cutlers — making goads and ploughs, and they must often have discussed the topics of their time. Occupations were usually hereditary then, as they still are in parts of the East, and Joseph probably began by regarding his eldest son as a destined carpenter like himself, but it must gradually have dawned on him as he listened to his son's conversation, that Jesus was not an ordinary lad willing to follow in his father's footsteps and do whatever was customary to be

done. Do we make too great an assumption when we imagine Joseph saying to his son, 'Well, Jesus, what *do* you want to be when you grow up?' and the boy replying, 'A rabbi, dad!'

The times were very disturbed, and Galilee was a particularly disturbed part of Palestine. A series of wars had devastated the country for forty years before Jesus was born, and in the course of them many Jews had been killed. Bands of patriots, called Zealots, ranged the hills of Galilee, as Sinn Feiners ranged the hills of Ireland nearly two thousand years later, slaying Romans where they could; and we may believe that Joseph and his son often discussed these fierce and fanatical men and the whole political situation. Herod, the son of Antipater, was Governor of Galilee; his brother Phasael was Governor of Jerusalem: and a bloody-minded couple they were. Jerusalem was sacked after a long siege, and its inhabitants, men, women and children, were slaughtered like sheep. Israel was turned into a wilderness. Between the years 67-37 B.C. 'far more than a hundred thousand Jews were killed,' says Dr. Klausner. 'And these were the pick of the nation, the healthiest, mainly the young men, and the most enthusiastic, who had refused to suffer the foreign yoke.' These events occurred in the young-manhood of Joseph, and he must often have recited them to his son as they worked together at the bench.

It is inevitable that a people who have been persecuted so long and extensively as the Jews have been persecuted should seek for some explanation of their misery, some consolation for it. Why should they, more than other people, have had to bear these miseries? They solved their problem by concluding that they were the Chosen People of God and that the hosts of evil raged against them on that account. A Messiah would presently come and deliver them from all their sorrows and sufferings. The little boy, Jesus, as he made goads and ploughs, listened to his father's tales of wrong and misery, heard him say that a Messiah had long been promised the Jews and must soon come, and may have felt his mind fired by the hope that he might grow up to be his people's deliverer. All round him was talk of trouble and of patriotic Zealots and overbearing, oppressive Romans. The boy would go into the synagogue to be taught the *Torah*, and would hear tales of Roman raids and raids on Romans. Judah, the Galilean Zealot, probably

stirred the heroic imagination of this boy in Nazareth as Edward Carson, in Ulster, and Michael Collins, in Southern Ireland, stirred the heroic imagination of Irish boys, as the imagination of little Scots was stirred by Bruce and Wallace, as Elizabeth stirred the heroic imagination of boys in England.

The times were a little quieter when Jesus was a boy than they had been in his father's youth, but the peace was spurious and did not last long. Herod, once he was secured upon the throne, tried to rule peacefully over his turbulent, but exhausted, subjects, and they, because they were worn out, because their young men were nearly all dead, were content enough to be ruled. But his villainies were not all ended, and he has a record of brutal murders after his accession which is appalling to read. The Jews lived in terror. In 31 B.C. they lost about thirty thousand people and many herds of cattle in an earthquake. There was a famine in the years 25-24, which was followed by plague and pestilence. The cup of Israel's sorrow was full. On the death of Herod riots and tumults broke out all over Palestine. His successor, Archelaus, slaughtered three thousand men in the Temple. Three or four years before Jesus was born the Jews rose against the Romans 'throughout all the provinces, Judea, Idumea, Galilee, and beyond Jordan; no quarter was given to any Roman legion or to any Herodian soldiers or to anybody who did not enrol himself as a member of some nationalist party - complete anarchy prevailed'. But this revolt was suppressed by Varus, who 'burnt Sepphoris and sold its inhabitants into slavery'. Jerusalem capitulated to him, and he sent his soldiers in pursuit of the rebels who had fled from the city. Two thousand of these rebels were crucified. The leaders of the revolt in Idumea were sent for trial to Rome, and were put to death by command of the Emperor Augustus. Throughout the years that followed, tyrannies were common, and the child Jesus would be familiar with the long tale of tyrannies past, tyrannies present, and the dreadful anticipation of tyrannies to come. At the time of his birth, his people were terrorised. 'None dare take part in political matters or adopt a definite attitude towards the fortunes of his miserable but beloved fatherland: he might not even utter his ideas aloud. Spies were everywhere and police held the population in subjection: all alike were downtrodden and overcome by fear.'

Into this frightened and temporarily subdued world came young Jesus, whose quick wits were animated by his quiet, industrious father's talk. In the house Mary, conventional, absorbed in her children and her home, was busy with her babies. Outside, in the workshop, she could hear the hammering that went to the making of goads and ploughs, but she could not hear the seditious talk of her husband or, if she heard it, we may suppose that she hushed it when she could. What sort of talk was that for a boy to hear in such times as those? Had Joseph no thought for his young children? Let him mind his own business and leave sedition and uprising to those who had not the sense to look after their own affairs? How did he suppose she was going to bring up a family of young children if their father were to be killed in a rebellion?

LXV

Then came calamity. The adored father died. We do not know the date of Joseph's death, nor are we told anything about him after the time of the visit to the Temple. He fades out of the picture. There are lengthier and more explicit references to Joseph of Arimathea in the Gospels than there are to Joseph, the father of Jesus, which is odd, whether we regard him as the actual, or only the putative, father. It is probable, however, that Joseph died when Jesus had passed the age of puberty, and was old enough to earn the family living. If Mary had had a child every year after her marriage to Joseph, and the number of her children was no more than seven, the youngest of them would have been about six when Jesus was found debating in the Temple. The majority of them were still too young, we may reasonably suppose, to earn their living at the date of their father's death, if, as I believe, that event occurred when Jesus was still under twenty.

There are the elements of a tragic situation here. Jesus, longing to be an evangelist and hoping that he may be the Messiah, finds himself not only bereft of the father he loved, with whom he had had long workshop discussions, but obliged to abandon his ambition because he must win the bread of his mother and brothers and sisters. We can almost hear Mary, the conventional mother, informing the lad that he must now

take his father's place. 'You're the eldest, Jesus, and you must be a father to your little brothers and sisters! . . .' That tragedy has happened too often for us not to realise its poignancy. The young workman, whose mind is filling with a different dream from that which animates the minds of the Zealots, is suddenly compelled to shut that vision away, to behave like a dutiful son and a good brother, to subdue his ambition to the needs of his family, to win bread when he would prefer to win souls. 'You're all I have now to depend on, Jesus,' his mother kept on harping at him. 'James isn't old enough, and even if he were, you're the eldest! . . .' And so the lad laid his dream away and became the support of his mother and her children.

But can we doubt that there was resentment in his mind that he should have had to lay his dream aside, or that, as he grew older, he saw in his mother the chief obstacle to the realisation of his desire, or that he resolved, immediately all his brothers and sisters were adult, to leave home and begin his evangelistic life? Holy men, in all ages, William Booth as much as Francis of Assisi, have had to contend with family opposition to their pious intentions. Augustine's mother is no commoner in hagiology than the mother of Aquinas.

It is very likely that Jesus proposed more than once in those hidden years between the time when he was twelve and the time when he was about thirty, that he should relinquish the burden of deputy father. His brothers and sisters were now old enough to take care of themselves and of their mother. Why, then, should he remain in Nazareth any longer? But it is equally likely that compulsion was put upon him to remain at the head of his family. 'Your poor dear father! . . .' we can imagine Mary, with ready tears in her eyes, beginning every plea that he should stay at home. He was probably a very good workman. His goads and ploughs may have been among the best that were made in that neighbourhood. The family was affluent in comparison with many in Nazareth, more affluent than it had seemed likely to be when death snatched Joseph away. Mary, loving security and the esteem of her neighbours, and desiring to keep all her children about her, would abhor and discourage every suggestion that her son should take to a vagrant life, becoming an itinerant preacher, living from hand to mouth! . . . 'It's your duty to take your

father's place, Jesus. Your poor dear father would have liked you to take his place! . . .'

LXVI

And then, as suddenly as disaster had come and made lumber of his dream, Jesus asserted his right to lead his life in his own way. The dream had been laid down, but it was still there, still ready to be revived; and as he came to be 'about thirty', it demanded that it should be fulfilled. The young carpenter and joiner, doing his daily chores about Nazareth, threw down his adze and chisel and saw, realising that he must now or never become, not a respected rabbi in a synagogue, but a wandering evangelist with no settled place and no domestic ties. There were probably rows at home, with Mary alternatively pleading and scolding, weeping and abusing, and her sons and daughters standing round and joining their appeals to hers. But Jesus was adamant. He had done his duty by his family long enough. Now, he must do his duty by himself, by his conscience, by his God; and so, without any hesitation, and despite tears from his mother and sisters, and protestations from his brothers, he went off to be baptised by his cousin, John, though neither man appears to have claimed or to have acknowledged their relationship at Jordan. It may have been the news of John's evangelism that brought Jesus to his decision. His cousin was doing what he had longed all his life to do! . . .

If we will try to put ourselves in the state of mind of these small-town people in a distant province, we will find it easy to understand the attitude of his family towards Jesus on this occasion. Mary was a respectable widow of the lower middle or upper working class. She had that intense pride in respectability which is both the strength and the weakness of such people. She liked to be well regarded by the authorities, especially the ecclesiastical authorities, and probably disapproved of any sympathy her husband and her eldest son may have felt for Zealots.¹ She liked security, regular living, peace and a prosperous business. Her eldest son's peculiar religious aspirations, involving him in argument and disrepute with re-

¹ One of the Twelve Apostles, Simon, was a Zealot.

spectable rabbis, must have shocked her. If he had been content to become a rabbi, preaching in the synagogue in Nazareth, she would have felt pride in him, as an Irish mother feels pride in her son who becomes a priest or a minister in an orthodox religious society, but he was not content. He wanted to wander about the country without visible means of subsistence, and to hobnob with all sorts of people, including men and women who were utterly disreputable. We have only to think for a moment of the feelings of a respectable woman of any class, but especially of the lower middle or upper working class, at the news of her son's association with thieves and vagabonds and public prostitutes to-day to realise how appalled Mary must have been by her son's behaviour. We have seen in our own time what was the attitude of respectable people to a clergyman who frequented the company of Piccadilly whores in the belief that he might redeem them from their terrible traffic. How much more stiff and unbending and disapproving must have been the attitude of small-town people two thousand years ago to one who not only frequented such company, but insulted the clergy, calling them vipers and hypocrites and every kind of opprobrious epithet, and habitually violated the religious code of his people. Mary and her children must have been shocked to the heart's core by Jesus' behaviour. He had abandoned a good trade, of which he was a master, and in doing so, had endangered the livelihood of his mother and his brothers and sisters; and in addition to this sufficiently deplorable act, had set himself up against his elders and betters, social, ecclesiastical and educational,¹ and was attempting to establish

¹ Estimates of the education Jesus had received are various and sometimes ridiculous. There are writers who suppose him to have been sufficiently familiar with Greek to have been able to pun in that language, as, for example, when he said, according to the legendary story in Matthew's gospel, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church....', an interpolation obviously made in the interests of the presumptuous Bishop of Rome. We do not know what education he had, but it must have been elementary. He could read and write. St. John (vii. 15), reports an occasion in the Temple when 'the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?' What they meant by 'letters' is problematical, for they could not have supposed him to be illiterate: they probably meant that he was not a 'sage' or scholar. There was a widespread system of education in Israel in his time. 'The centuries of work carried out by the "Scribes", and the Pharisees who succeeded them,' says Dr. Klausner, 'were not without effect. There was gradually created in Palestine an educated class, comprising not only the priestly families and the upper classes, but the common people as well. Those able to read and write became more numerous.... Josephus... mentions

a new kind of religion out of the lower ranks of the working classes and the dregs of society. We can best appreciate Mary's attitude if we will think of the feelings of a respectable grocer with a flourishing business, who finds his son, not only proposing to give up his connection with the business, at the management of which he is excellent, but proposing to join The Salvation Army. Even to-day, when everyone speaks well of The Army, such a proposal would not be welcomed by a prosperous parent. It would have been opposed with bitterness by him in the day when William Booth was founding his Army.

To these simple village people, and especially this simple, village woman, narrowly educated, if, indeed, she *was* educated, and full of the possessive instinct that is strong in widows who have had to rear young children in circumstances of adversity, the decision of Jesus to take to the life of an itinerant preacher, and to set himself against authority, civil and ecclesiastic, must have seemed the decision of a lunatic. Upset by the reproaches of the rabbis, and the unkindly comments of their neighbours, Mary and her sons made up their minds to have him put under restraint. How distressed this decent, unimaginative and highly respectable widow must have felt when some thoughtless or unkind neighbour came rushing into her house to say, 'I saw your son Jesus the other day with that awful woman from Magdala . . . a common tart!' Need we feel surprised that, ashamed and perplexed, she took her sons with her to see if she could not persuade him to return to Nazareth and give up this wild adventure, or that, finding persuasion was likely to be

as a generally known fact that the *Torah* makes it incumbent to teach children to read and write, that they should know the laws, and be told the deeds of their forefathers. . . . In spite of this, however, most of the village peasants were Ammē ha-aretz (ignorant of the *Torah*). . . . But in the larger and smaller towns, and especially in Jerusalem, there could be found many who were instructed in the *Torah* among the artisans, merchants, priests and officials; and though the "sages" were yet few, the "students of the sages" were numerous. (*Jesus of Nazareth*. By Joseph Klausner, pps. 193-4.) It is certain that Joseph, apart from the fact that the *Torah* enjoined him to teach his children to read it, had a special pride in educating his quick-witted eldest son. 'It was not till thirty years after the crucifixion,' says Dr. Klausner, 'that a system of schools in every town was organised by the High Priest, Jehoshua ben Gamala' and he adds that if there was not in Nazareth, as there was in Jerusalem, a boys' school, and if, as may be possible, Joseph was illiterate or 'deficient in the *Torah*', it is very likely that 'Jesus learnt from the minister of the synagogue', and that he 'certainly knew the Law and the Prophets and the Book of Psalms, and had, also, some knowledge of the Book of Daniel and also, perhaps, of the Book of Enoch'.

difficult, they decided the best thing they could do would be to have him arrested as a man 'beside himself'?

But the decision snapped the tie between them and Jesus. If he had had any doubts in his mind about his duty to them, those doubts were now removed. He had done with his relations.

He had taken his first disciples from their homes and their work. Peter had been drawn away from his wife and her delicate mother. James and John had deserted their old father, leaving him in his boat entangled with gear. They had not even stopped to pull in his nets, but left him to draw them in as best he could. Now, Jesus told them that 'he that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me'. He promised rich rewards to those who would abandon their families for his sake. 'And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or brother, or wife, or children, or lands for my sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life' (Matthew xix. 29). Mark makes it even plainer (x. 29-30) than Matthew that to Jesus the society, the group, the church, if we like to use that expression, was more important than the family. He had learnt that the family, which can uplift and benefit, can also corrupt and ruin. I believe that he deeply resented his mother's attempt to thwart him in his evangelistic life, so much that he cut off his relations with her for the rest of his life, and that he also resented as deeply the fact that he had been withheld from his career for so many years to earn the living for her and her children. There is nothing unnatural in this. A man with a high sense of vocation must feel that no tie should be considered great enough to withhold him from it. Who thinks ill of Francis of Assisi for putting his religious life before his father's wishes? Do not all Christians regard his father as oppressive for having attempted to restrain his piety? There is no body of Christian people who will not admit, in theory, that a man must put his duty to God before his duty to his family or his nation, although in practice very few Christians are prepared to go so far in Christian practice as that. But Jesus went the whole way. He cut off his family without, so far as we can discover, a single qualm.

LXVII

One of the difficulties I have had in accepting the doctrine of veneration for Mary is that her conduct to her son is irreconcilable with any belief by her in his divinity. If she had thought for a moment that she had miraculously conceived her eldest son, instead of conceiving him in the natural manner by Joseph, and that she was the Mother of God, is it likely that she would have left his side for a second, that she would have attempted in any way to interfere with his activities or that she would ever have brought herself to the point of agreeing to have him arrested as a dangerous imbecile? We are invited in the eighteenth verse of the first chapter of Matthew, a gospel that seems to me to be under as much suspicion as the Fourth, to believe that Mary was 'found' by Joseph 'with child of the Holy Ghost', although in the first sixteen verses of the same chapter an attempt is made to prove the descent of Jesus from David *through Joseph*. The sixteenth verse does not, indeed, say that Jesus is Joseph's son – it could scarcely say that in view of what is contained in the eighteenth verse: it says only that 'Joseph' was 'the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ'. The phraseology can be read to mean either that Jesus was born of Joseph and Mary or that he was born of Mary without any assistance from Joseph; but, unless we accept the suggestion of some ingenious, but implausible, authors that Mary also belonged to the royal house of David, the descent of Jesus from that monarch can only have been through the body of Joseph.

The genealogy in Matthew i. 1–16 does not agree with that in Luke iii. 23–38, which is one of the most thorough genealogies in the history of man: for it traces Joseph's descent from Adam. According to Matthew, the descent from David was through Solomon, the son of Bath-Sheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, with whom David committed adultery; but according to Luke, the descent from David was through Nathan. The grandfather of Jesus, that is to say, Joseph's father, was called Jacob, according to Matthew, but Luke calls him Heli. The doctrines of the divine origin of Jesus, in the sense that he was more divine than Socrates or Shakespeare, or

that he was miraculously conceived by his mother, who remained a virgin after his birth,¹ or that Mary's mother, Anne, was also immaculately conceived by some sort of heavenly parthenogenesis have no basis in reason or, what is more important, in religious necessity. The Christian religion does not depend for its veracity or value on grotesque manipulations of natural facts or grotesque assumptions about the origin of its founder. It would still provide an invaluable rule of life if Jesus were universally acknowledged to be the eldest son of an elderly working-man who had married a young wife, nor would its validity and worth be less if Jesus had never risen from the dead.

LXVIII

It was in Capernaum that the ministry was begun, and to Capernaum I came with thoughts such as those set out in the preceding sections. Here Jesus lodged with Peter and Peter's wife and mother-in-law, and here he was successful in performing some cures so remarkable that they have been called miracles. He cured Peter's mother-in-law of a fever; a centurion's servant of a palsy, and a variety of people of nervous diseases which were known under the generic title of 'possession by the devil'; and he raised the daughter of Jairus from 'the dead'; and had such virtue in him that he healed a woman who was suffering from an issue of blood of twelve years' standing through being touched by her. It is easy to believe in the curative power of Jesus, since many people can testify to-day to the singularly assuasive powers possessed by many men and women. There was a sister, a Scotswoman, in charge of the ward in a military hospital in Wimereux in which I was a patient in 1918, who possessed assuasive powers so remarkable that I prayed that she, rather than any other sister or nurse, might dress my wounds. She was not a woman of intellect — the books she read were awful — nor did she seem to realise that she possessed power to relieve pain by merely touching those who suffered it; but she had that power in a great

¹ Jerome, towards the end of the fourth century, tried to prove that Joseph, too, had been a virgin all his life. The brothers and sisters of Our Lord, he claimed were really his cousins, as the Baptist was, and the children of the virgin's sister, who was also called Mary!

degree, and I am one of many who are in her debt. I have seen this calm Scotswoman, who never became ruffled in any circumstances, approach a soldier who was crying with pain, and lay her hand on him, saying, 'What's the matter with you?' and stop his tears and his pain. There was an Australian in a bed next to mind, who suffered from an obscure disease in his foot which baffled the doctors. I have heard him sob like a baby with pain, and I have seen her soothe his suffering by touching him. She could not cure him — he died — but she reduced his pain. These are mysteries of which I do not pretend to have an explanation, but I am ready to believe that Jesus was a man of such unusual quality that merely to touch the hem of his garment was to be cured.

He seems to have liked living in Capernaum. Matthew, who was called from a seat of the custom in Capernaum, ever refers to it as 'his own city' (ix. i.). There is no Capernaum to speak of to-day. The visitor is shown the ruined synagogue in which Jesus is supposed to have preached. On the other side of the Sea of Galilee from Capernaum, he is told, is the steep place down which the Gadarene swine ran. It did not appear precipitous, and the swine could scarcely have been drowned if they had not been bent on their own destruction; for the descent was easy, and any creature, having slipped over it, could have halted itself long before the water was reached. Close to Capernaum is the Mount on which the Sermon is said to have been preached, and it was here that he chose the Twelve Disciples. The accounts of the Sermon and the selection of the Apostles differ a good deal in the gospels, but the authors were not historians nor even exact recorders, and discrepancies in the sequence of events are of no consequence, so long as we do not insist that the Bible was dictated by God and that every statement in it, however discordant it may be with other statements, is literally true.

Sitting in the strong sunlight on the tumbled stones of the synagogues of Capernaum or standing on a rickety pier by the Sea of Galilee, I found myself more certain than ever before that I could give my deep devotion to the young workman who dreamt of a spirit that surpassed nation and family, and was condemned to a cruel and ignominious death, but that I could feel little or no devotion for, or, indeed, interest in, a third part

of the Trinity who took on flesh for thirty years and then returned to the Godhead. I can worship a man who aspired to be a god, but I feel only aversion from a god who reduces himself to the level of a man. I am ready to suffer much for Jesus the man: I am not ready to suffer anything for Jesus the god. At various times during the Journey I asked about a dozen laymen, none of whom was what is called an 'intellectual', whether or not he believed in the doctrine of the Trinity. Not one of them did. They shared my belief that the largest single sect in Great Britain is composed of unofficial Unitarians who are to be found in almost every Christian organisation. Yet the *Laetitia* had among her passengers a large number of priests and ministers, Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Nonconformists, each one of whom was committed to belief in this metaphysical abstraction. The single uncharitable clergyman on the ship was a High Anglican, or 'spike' as a young Modernist would have called him in derision, who complained because a layman referred to a Presbyterian minister as a clergyman or a priest - I have forgotten which word was used. 'He's not a clergyman,' the High Anglican exclaimed. 'Oh! And what is he?' the layman answered. 'A meen-i-ster!' the High Anglican said with a sneer. If he had realised the effect he made on the layman he would have held his sneering tongue. 'You should have told him,' I said, when the story was repeated to me, 'that there's a Roman Catholic priest at my table who does not admit the validity of *his* orders!' 'I didn't think of that,' the layman said. 'I hope he makes his sneer again, so that I can get *that* in at him!'

The whole doctrine of the Trinity is extraordinarily hard to follow. Before the Incarnation it was composed of three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, each of whom was pure spirit, 'without body, parts or passions', as the first of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion puts it. At the Incarnation the Trinity became in the most amazing manner disintegrated, the Second Person, the Son, becoming both flesh and spirit. After the Resurrection when, we are assured, Jesus ascended into heaven in his earthly body, 'with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature', as the fourth Article puts it, and rejoined the Trinity which, however, was now partly flesh and partly spirit: a Father

wholly spirit, a Son partly flesh and partly spirit; and a Holy Ghost wholly spirit; and the Trinity has remained in that extraordinary state for nineteen hundred years. I find this doctrine incomprehensible. So did all my fellow-passengers with whom I discussed it. Has Jesus, I ask myself in bewilderment, been performing all the physical functions of the body since he entered heaven? Immediately after the Resurrection he appeared to the disciples in Jerusalem and, according to St. Luke xxiv. 42-43, ate 'a piece of a broiled fish and of an honeycomb'. He had previously appeared to two of them, with whom he had eaten a meal in Emmaus. St. John tells a story of another meal, of fish and bread (xxi. 12-14) eaten on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias in company with Simon Peter and six other disciples. Is he still eating? The Athanasian Creed obliges us, on pain of eternal damnation, to believe that he is, and that he will continue to eat until the Judgment Day, when, presumably, the body, which needs nourishment, will be thrown aside, and the Trinity will no longer be polluted with flesh.

I came away from Capernaum thinking that these things were very hard, and that I did not believe them, and wondering why they should be considered to have any religious value. If it is necessary to the redemption of mankind that we should believe in the Immaculate Conception of Anne, the Mother of Mary, why should the doctrine stop at her? Why should we not believe that Anne's mother was immaculately conceived, and Anne's grandmother, and great-grandmother! . . .

LXIX

We drove from Capernaum to Tiberias, passing on the way shepherds who moved us strangely because they seemed to have stepped out of the Bible. They still watch their flocks by night. Shepherding does not change in countries where fields are open and the hills have hedges neither of stone nor thorn, and wild beasts may descend upon unprotected sheep and goats and destroy them. The Syrian and the Palestinian shepherd lives day and night with his animals, establishing an intimacy with them which is infinitely touching to observe, and appears to have no need of dogs nor of orders: he leads his

flocks, and they, having complete confidence in him, follow. It is this peculiar communion between the shepherd and his sheep and goats which makes the symbol of the Good Shepherd singularly apt in the Gospels. No one can perceive its full aptness until he has seen the Syrian and Galilean and Judean shepherds at their work. The frequency with which Jesus used this symbol of the good Shepherd explains some of his power over the simple country people to whom, especially at the beginning of his ministry, he appealed with so much force. He emphasised or illuminated his meaning by pointing it with analogies drawn from the most familiar facts of their lives. There cannot have been anyone in Israel who had not many times seen a shepherd with his flock. Thousands of Israelites must have had relatives who were shepherds. The whole traffic of sheep and goats must have been as familiar to Jewish boys and girls in Israel as the whole traffic of shipbuilding is to boys and girls in Belfast, even though they themselves and their families have no connexion with it. Sheep and goats were in the air of Palestine as ships are in the air of Belfast. The peculiar appeal of Jesus in those early days at Capernaum lay in his extraordinary power of making his listeners see his point through the familiar incidents of their daily lives. He transmuted the commonplace, making it unique and significant.

Tiberias, which was built in honour of the Emperor Tiberius by that Herod (Antipas) who ruled Galilee and Transjordania in the lifetime of Jesus, is now a small watering place on the Sea of Galilee; and here we were first seriously beset by *baksheesh*-hunting Arabs, and encountered our first example of modern enterprise in Palestine. Tiberias is called 'The Galilee Lido'! A busy little ruffian, a Jew I suspect, though I am uncertain of this, buzzed about us, snatching coins for chairs every time anybody sat down. I must have paid for the same seat three or four times while I was in Tiberias, because, I suppose, I was too cowardly to protest against this fellow's exploitation of travellers, and was fearful of causing a row. Plato, remarking in *The Laws* on the unpopularity of tradesmen and tavern-keepers, explains it by reference to their dishonesty. If people of quality, what we call ladies and gentlemen, should by some ludicrous misfortune — which he begged heaven always to avert — be driven into trade or compelled to keep hotels, we

should all, he most unwarrantably supposes, expect them to behave uncommonly well in those occupations, treating their customers or guests with courtesy, kindness and solicitude. The occupations would be 'conducted on principles of strict integrity'. Plato seems to have been exceptionally lucky in his ladies and gentlemen! . . . 'But look at the actual facts!' he cries:

'For purposes of commerce a man sets up his quarters in some solitary spot remote from everywhere; there he entertains the famished traveller and the refugee from tempests with welcome lodging, and provides them with calm in storm and cool shelter in heat. But what comes next? Where he might treat his customers as so many friends, and add an hospitable banquet to the entertainment, he behaves as though he were dealing with captive enemies who had fallen into his hands, and holds them to the hardest, most iniquitous, most abominable terms of ransom. These malpractices, and others like them, are to be found in all these callings, and it is they which have brought catering for the wants of the distressed into merited ill-repute.'

I dare say the tavern-keepers and the tradesmen could make a sound defence of themselves against Plato's charges, saying a few things about those ladies and gentlemen who do not pay their debts, or pay them only after a long interval or the serving of a summons, but allowing for that defence, there is substance in the charge. I certainly thought so at Tiberias, and although I have no hope that the little, unshaven and exceedingly scrubby-looking ruffian to whom I am referring will ever see this book, I hope that the nature of my complaint against him will somehow percolate to his mind. Snotty-nosed Arab brats bothered us here, as they were increasingly to bother us the farther we went into Palestine. Two boatmen, each with a performance to give, rowed us a little way on the lake, but signally failed to persuade us of their apostolic quality. These men, if they had been called, would not have come hurrying to accept the invitation: they would have extended their dirty palms for *baksheesh*. They did their piece, which included the singing of a song, in Arabic, I think, and then almost automatically spouted the only word many Arabs seem to know: *Baksheesh! Baksheesh!*

I was not favourably impressed by the Arabs, nor have I read or heard anything which increases my respect for them.

Books in which they are treated as little less than angels bore me to distraction, and I suspect the authors of these works ofliking Arabs only because they are rather infantile and incompetent. When I hear an Englishman sentimentalising about the noble Arab, and remember the dirty, inefficient, and greedy *baksheesh*-hunters I saw wherever I went, I feel rage rising within me. These people will praise the Arab and belittle the Jew merely, so far as I can discover, because the Jew is industrious, enterprising and adult, and unwilling to be patronised like a pet dog, whereas the Arab flatters the European's sense of his own superiority by playing the part of the helpless nomad, the simple child of the desert, the melting-eyed infant who will allow the big, strong Englishman to take care of him! . . . When I replied to the Arab idolators that their pets seemed a lot of lazy and incompetent louts, I was instantly subjected to recitals of the oppressions the Arabs had had to bear under Turkish misrule. 'The poor devils have been ground down for generations!' No doubt they have, but the Jews have suffered the extremes of persecution, including captivity in Babylon on at least two occasions, incessant raids and wars inside their own territory, slavery in Egypt that lasted for four and a half centuries, and impositions, deprivations and pogroms in Europe from the time of the dispersion to these days of Hitler; yet they have maintained their spirit and their fortitude, and Israel, under their cultivation, blossomed in the past, as it is beginning to blossom in the present, like a rose. It seems, if the apologists for the Arabs are to be trusted, that the Arabs have nothing like the spirit of the Jews, that they are shiftless, shambling creatures, ready to collapse at the first hint of adversity. I find it hard to believe that a ruling race can spring from a people whose infants' first articulate cry is, not 'Allah', but '*Baksheesh*'. That whine, from the moment we reached Capernaum to the moment we left Haifa, was continually in our ears.

LXX

Events, since my return from Palestine, have caused me to take interest in the relation of the Jew to the Arab, and the problem of Zionism. I have not read an argument in favour

of the Arabs' claim to dominate in Palestine which is worth the paper on which it is written. If the Arab is given the right to restrict the number of Jews who may enter Jerusalem, he may claim the right to reduce the number of those already there. At the beginning of the general strike which was followed by a prolonged period of rioting, ambushes and murders, the Palestinian Arab Congress, which was held at Jerusalem, formulated three cardinal demands which must be conceded before the strike could be called off. Those demands were (a) that all Jewish immigration into Palestine should forthwith cease; (b) that the sale of Arab land to Jews should be prohibited; and (c) that a National Representative Government should immediately be constituted. The third demand need not now be discussed. Any form of government that is established in Palestine will be subject to the Mandate while the Mandate continues in force, and it will, in my belief, continue for a very long time. But the first two demands call for examination. Would they, if they were conceded, be of any practical value to the Arabs? The Jewish population in Palestine could easily surpass in numbers that of the Arabs in time, even if not another Jew were admitted to the country; for the Jews are not only prolific, but, because of the care with which they tend their children and the superiority of their standards of living, their chances of survival are greater than those of the Arabs.

There are no sore-eyed children among the Jews, nor any young men and women who are blind because of neglect. Not once in the course of my brief stay in Palestine did a Jew solicit alms from me. I was astonished, indeed, at the rarity with which I saw Jews, for we did not stop at the Jewish settlements in the Plain of Esdraelon nor did I visit Tel-Aviv. I had expected to find the country overrun by them, but I found instead that it seemed to be overrun by Arabs, and I could not escape the conclusion that it would be better with fewer Arabs and more Jews. The value of the first Arab demand appears to me entirely fictitious. The Jews in Palestine already can, in a generation or two, produce a larger and fitter and infinitely more efficient and industrious population than the Arabs are ever likely to produce. An editorial in the *Observer* (Sunday, September 6, 1936) says, 'There can be no peace in

Palestine until the principle be put into operation that the Jewish element must not exceed one-third of the whole population.' But how is that principle to be put into force? And why should it be? The editor can scarcely mean that if, in the natural growth of population, the Jews exceed one-third of the whole population, there shall be a new Massacre of Innocents. Are the excess, then, to be deported? 'How,' the editorial continues, 'can Arab rights, civil or religious, be safeguarded if the Arabs be displaced from the control of their own country?' The contingency, if it ever occurs, can only come about in a natural manner, by growth of population, but since when has Palestine been the Arabs' 'own country'? The Turks owned it for five hundred years until the British took it from them. The Arabs have neither earned nor won it, and many of them entered it for the first time *after* our Mandate was established. It is no more their country than it is the Bantus! As a safeguard against Jewish domination in Palestine, the first Arab demand is illusory. The second demand seems likely to be no less illusory than the first. It has the additional demerit that, if it should prove not to be illusory, it would probably result in grave injury to the country.

What does the demand amount to? That land now owned or rented by Arabs shall not be sold or let to Jews? May it be sold or let to people of other races or religions? If so, what steps, if any, can be taken to prevent these purchasers from selling or letting the land to Jews? No purchaser of any property will allow the seller to dictate to him what he may or may not do with it. May Arab land be sold to a Jew who has become a convert to Christianity or Muhammadanism? How can an Arab, heavily pressed for money, be prevented from nominally hiring a Jew to 'manage' his farm, but in reality letting it to him in return for a rent which is, in fact, a wage? A solicitor who has been struck off the rolls has been known to become 'managing clerk' to some inefficient or impoverished solicitor and to continue very profitably in the practice of the law. The 'managing clerk' is paid a salary on a sliding scale: his 'employer' is paid a fixed annual sum which is rather more than he could ever have earned by his own exertions. It is beyond the wit of man to lay down any law forbidding the sale of Arab land to Jews which cannot legally be evaded. There

was a clump of alison on my garden wall. I planted arabis beside it. Two or three years afterwards there was no alison on my garden wall. The arabis had driven it off! . . . There would be grave danger to the prosperity of Palestine if the second demand *could* be fulfilled. What hope is there for a country where the incompetent and the lazy are not only encouraged, but safeguarded and even subsidised, in their inefficiency and laziness? Does any person seriously propose that land now wastefully and inefficiently tilled shall, by force of law, for ever be kept in the unthrifty guard of inefficient and wasteful people? Yet that precisely is what the second Arab demand amounts to.

In a land once occupied by two peoples, the race which is superior in energy, talent and industry will either drive out the inferior race or retain it on terms of servitude. Apart from the murder or expulsion of every Jew now in Palestine the Arab, unless he changes himself drastically, cannot hope to keep the Jews from prevailing in Palestine; and neither of those methods of securing authority is likely to be attempted or tolerated. The Jews are in Palestine, and nothing will shift them out of it. Even if attempts to exterminate them were tolerated, they could organise a resistance and powers of retaliation that might result not in their extermination, but in the extermination of the Arabs. The Mandatory Government cannot allow itself to be bullied by terrorists. Our self-respect alone would forbid us to let gangster methods of obtaining authority prevail. The Arabs must, therefore, accept Palestinian Jewry as an established fact which can neither be reduced nor abolished. If they wish to prevail in Palestine they must do so by making themselves the superiors of the Jewish energy, enterprise, and education. They will do better to copy the Jews, especially in their standards of living, than they will by trying to exterminate them. The protagonists of the Arabs support their advocacy with arguments that are either sentimental or silly. I have heard a clergyman arguing against the admission of any other Jews to Palestine on the ground that those already there are what he called a godless lot, they have built nine cinemas in Tel-Aviv, but not one synagogue. This is an amusing argument, and might, if it were made an active principle in all government, result in the depopulation of large tracts of the civilised world.

BETHANY

From a photograph by Mr. MacAuliffe Woods



The charge, if it were true, seems to me to have no relevance to the general political situation, and even if every Jew were an atheist, I fail to see what this would have to do with his right, assuming he has a right at all, to live in Palestine; and those people who argue from this ground display a prejudice which, in another age, would have made Inquisitioners of them all. But it is not true: there are 85 synagogues in Tel-Aviv!

Lady Coote, writing in the *Daily Telegraph* in June, 1936, advanced the amazing argument for limiting the numbers of Jews who may be admitted to Palestine that 'another fundamental cause of the Arab's ill-feeling' against the Jews 'is jealously engendered by seeing the waving fields of corn grown by the Jews alongside his spare crop. It has been calculated that it takes sixty acres of land to keep an Arab family and only five acres to maintain a Jewish one, owing to the latter's up-to-date methods plus capital'. Because the Jew is twelve times more industrious and enterprising and intelligent and productive than the Arab, the Jew is to be penalised by proscription, and the Arab, poor fellow, to be endowed by the state. We are urged to imagine the feelings of the Arab when he sees that the Jew can produce from five acres what he can barely produce from sixty, and *to sympathise with them!* . . . Can sentimentality descend to greater depths of ineptitude and folly than that? 'No one visiting Palestine,' Lady Coote continues, 'can fail to admire the work of the Jewish people there, but it must be noted that they have both brains and capital, whereas the Arabs, after 500 years of Turkish rule, are still a poor and backward people.' It might also be noted that the Jews, after several thousand years of misrule everywhere, are able to make five acres of stony soil in Palestine do as much work as an Arab can extract from sixty acres! . . .

As between Arabs and Jew, the Jew has endured infinitely more than the Arab, and if he has now, as Lady Coote admits, more brains than the Arab, is it sensible to suggest that he should be prevented from increasing the world's store of wealth so that a collection of unenterprising and listless Arabs may be allowed to enjoy a country which they themselves did not win, which was, in fact, won for them by the British Army. They did not deliver themselves from the Turk: they were delivered; and their deliverance was in part the result of our promise to

the Jews that they should have a National Home in Palestine, for that promise brought us aid in the War without which we might not have won it, without which the Arab might still be languishing under Turkish misrule.

Sir Flinders Petrie, whose name excites respect in all who hear it, writes more to the point on this subject than Lady Coote and the school of sentimentalists to which she belongs. In *The Times* of August 10, 1936, he says:

'My heart is with the Arab, if firmly and familiarly led; my head admires the civilised progress of the Jew, which is essential for the Arab in Palestine. The root of the present question is the use of land. At present it is mostly wasted by its misuse in Arab hands. Land is left to be rapidly denuded in the rains which scour it away to the sea. The result in the south and on the hills is having poor crops, if any. On some land which I explored I stopped up the ravines and banked the top soil so that no water ran off. Instead of poor crops the farmer grew water melons on the hill top and magnificent corn over that. It was a gain of five or ten times on the former season. . . .'

But what, I interrupt Sir Flinders to say, are we to think of the Arab who, despite five centuries of experience of this soil, could not think of so simple a plan of protecting his farm from rain storms? And can we really refuse to let this land be developed by Jews who, the friends of the Arabs admit, enrich it and increase its products after a few years of tillage. 'This might be done elsewhere,' Sir Flinders continues:

'if small grants were given for following directions to individual farmers, for the Arab seldom has initiative. Thus the land might be controlled by proper safeguard and fit inspectors. In this way there would be room for three or four times the present population. The Arab . . .'

who, according to Lady Coote, requires sixty acres to the Jew's five for the support of his family, requires, according to Sir Flinders Petrie:

'thirty acres for a family, the Jew only five; the Jewish feeding of cows gives seven times the milk of Arab feeding. The goat must be abolished. I therefore suggest a systematic direction and training of Arabs, step by step in practice, helped on by an Arab development fund to be derived from a large tax

on all considerable land sales. This would be all in favour of the Arab farmer by discouraging such sales, by such a generalised tenant right, and by guidance in far-sighted direction. Is this a feasible course? The Jewish responses to such a proposal is in its favour, as a beneficial settlement. The Arab response, so far, has been injured pride. Officially the omens are favourable.'

(The italics in that quotation are mine.) It may not unjustly be said that the best guidance and direction the Arab can receive is the spectacle of a Jewish farmer producing from five acres as much harvest as he produces from thirty or sixty. In any case, the fact is established by Sir Flinders Petrie and Lady Coote that the Arab is backward, lacking in initiative and enterprise, and that he cannot, without subsidies and intensive tuition, obtain anything like the results from the soil that a Jew obtains. These are facts which the Commission lately appointed to inquire into the Palestinian troubles will have to remember.

LXXI

The case for restricted immigration of Jews collapses when we remember that Palestine was formerly a much more populated country than it is now, as the history of its ruined cities proves. Sir Flinders Petrie asserts that the land will support 'three or four times the present population' if it is properly cultivated. Does it not, then, seem that the best thing that can happen to Palestine, the best thing in the interests of the Arab as well as of everybody else, is that Jewish immigration into Palestine should not be restricted, but encouraged? The Jews themselves are not of one mind on Zionism. Mr. Joseph Leftwich in an exceedingly able and passionately sincere book entitled *What will Happen to the Jews*, is almost antagonistic to the proposal to make Palestine the National Home of his people. (He is a devout Jew, more likely to be seen in a synagogue than in a cinema.) The country depressed him when he lived in it, though I think he hardly allows for its neglected state or remembers how prolific it must have been in the past, and he thinks that other countries, certain parts of Siberia, South America and Australia are more suitable than Palestine, if the Jews are to have a National Home at all. But why should they

have an artificially created National Home? he inquires. Their hope, he says, is in the land where they were born and bred. A German Jew, despite the persecutions of Hitler, thinks of Germany as his Fatherland: he cannot be comforted by his expatriation by a patch of earth in Palestine. An English Jew feels a love for England that is no less than a Gentile Englishman's. What Jew in New York wishes to leave that city for Jerusalem? It is unfortunate that so many of the Jews who have gone to Palestine in late years have gone to it, not out of any religious or racial longing, but to escape from persecution in other countries. Would they, one wonders, have settled in Tel-Aviv if they could have remained in security in Germany and Poland? Those are questions that only time can answer. It is enough now that wherever one sees in Palestine a well-cultivated soil, its inhabitants are always Jews. Wherever one sees slovenly soil, its inhabitants are Arabs.

LXXII

I went that night to Nazareth to sleep. My first sight of it will never fade out of my memory. We had halted at Cana where the marriage-feast is said to have been held, where Jesus was so rude and abrupt to his mother, and were harassed as usual by the *Baksheeshers*. A church, of course, stands on the site of the house where the feast was held, and one of the wine-jars can be viewed! An Arab dragged his blind wife and a child up to us and whined for alms. The man could have worked for a living, but he preferred to exploit his wife's eyeballs. He wailed and she wailed and the child wailed. He came close to me and, seizing his young wife by the chin, violently turned her face up so that I looked into her dreadful eyes, on which flies were feeding. A fearful rage shook me, and I had to hurry away lest I should kick him. He came whining after me, but luckily for us both, an emotional woman was overcome by his groans and whimpers and the spectacle of his blind wife being dragged along the dusty road, and she gave him the *baksheesh* I had denied him. I fear sometimes now that I let my hatred of whiners abolish my charity. Was I wrong to hasten from that man and his poor blind wife? I ask myself the question, and am dissatisfied with the reply.

The wrath which was roused in me by that importunate Arab was subdued by the beauty through which I drove to Nazareth. We turned a corner of a hill and saw below us, serene in the evening light, a white town encircled by moist green hills. I could not hear a sound rising from it. It was incredibly still. Looking back towards Syria, I could see the white head of Hermon shining in the sunset, and turning again to look on that white town under its green hills, I felt for a moment the peace which passeth all understanding. In that moment I would have given money to the whining Arab with the blind wife and fretful infant.

LXXIII

The Nazareth of our day is not the Nazareth in which Jesus lived and, according to some students, was born.¹ That Nazareth was destroyed long ago. Our Nazareth was built in the twelfth or thirteenth century on a site below the old town. The hills of Zebulum and Naphthali which encircle Nazareth are as tender as the hills of Judea are hard. In this green and gentle town, whose inhabitants, however, are reputed to have

¹ Our knowledge of Jesus is extraordinarily slight, though not, perhaps, much slighter than our knowledge of Shakespeare. If we do not know the date on which Jesus was born, we are not much better informed about our poet. Scholars seem to be agreed that the date of Jesus' birth was actually seven years earlier than is generally supposed, and that the present year, 1936, therefore, is 1943. The explanation is too long for a footnote, but it has to do with historical investigations. This calculation would make Jesus about 35 when he began his ministry. It is seldom realised that the whole of the sayings of Jesus in the New Testament do not amount to more than two longish B.B.C. talks. There is a good deal of controversy about the place of his birth. Mark, whose Gospel is supposed to be the first to have been written, and to have been composed from notes of his conversations with Peter in that Apostle's old age, says nothing about Bethlehem and seems to regard Nazareth as the native town of Jesus. Matthew and Luke assert that the birth occurred in Bethlehem, but they seem to have been fitting ancient prophecies of the birth-place of the Messiah rather than recording a fact. St. John does not repudiate or deny the Jews' assertion that Jesus was born, not in the royal city of Bethlehem but in Galilee, (vii. 41-2). There was a school of students who said that there was no such place as Nazareth in the time of Jesus, basing their assertion on the fact that the *Talmud* only mentions it in an adjectival form. They concluded, therefore, that Jesus was not a Nazarene, but a Nazarite, a member of a religious sect. This argument, however, has lost its validity because, says Dr. Klausner, the place, Nazareth or Natzrāth, 'is mentioned in an ancient "Lament" for the Ninth of Ab, composed by R. Eliezer ha-Kalir (who flourished, according to recent authorities, in the 7th century)... and based on an ancient *Baraita* treating of the "Twenty-four Courses of the Priests", and going back as far as the third century.' See *Jesus of Nazareth*, pps. 229-30.

been turbulent, the young carpenter and joiner grew to be a man. It reflects his nature. He had its gentleness and had also its inhabitants' stoutness of spirit, which was called turbulence by those who were inconvenienced by it. Out of this gentle town, so serenely set among green hills that do not daunt those who climb them, emerged the Saviour. It was not until he dared the brutal hills of Judea that his dream began to dissolve and could only be re-formed by his deliberate attempt to bring about his own death. There is a sense, the noblest, in which Jesus may be said to have committed suicide. Every man who won the Victoria Cross in the War was a fool who knew that he was seeking death; but without such divine folly as that, the soul of man would shrivel and die.

It is impossible to believe that Jesus was unaware of what he was doing when he went into Jerusalem and committed an act of violence in the Temple. If ever a man deliberately sought to establish a belief by dying for it, Jesus was that man. The leaders of the Irish Rebellion on Easter Monday, 1916, had no hope of military success, but they had hope of spiritual success, and it is undeniable that they obtained it. Finding their countrymen less eager than they had formerly been for independence, these men raised a rebellion in the belief that the British Government would probably overpower and execute them, and that their death, thus deliberately sought, would stir the conscience of Irish men and women and make them eager again for independence. I do not hold the dream they held, but it is not necessary to be in agreement with them to recognise their motive. In some such mood as theirs, I believe, Jesus went up to Jerusalem and assailed the High Priest's authority.

Nazareth stands in fertile country. Even in these times, when the land has been allowed to lapse from close cultivation, 'forests of palm-trees, fig-trees and pomegranates, and fields of high-growing though thin-eared crops of wheat and barley', grow round it. Every time Jesus left Nazareth he had to climb an ascending road that led him over a green hill; and when he reached the crest of any hill he climbed, one of the loveliest views in the world lay before him. North of Nazareth was snowy-headed Hermon, rising out of the brown plains of Syria, and the Lebanon mountains. Hermon was always in his eyes

when he came out of Nazareth. It prevailed over his country as it must have prevailed over his mind. That far mountain may have seemed to him like a peak in heaven, the footstool of the Almighty God Whose Son he aspired to be. On that high white hill he would one day be transfigured. Snow would fall about him and be lit by sunlight, so that he would shine with the lustre of God and seem to be God Himself. Turning to the west he could see low hills stretching to the Mediterranean, beyond which were countries he would one day dominate, though in his life he would never see them, of whose existence, indeed, he was unaware. There was among his contemporaries, however, a vehement young man of a family socially more important than his own, who would first persecute his followers and then become the most prominent of them; and this vehement young man, now named Saul, would wander in Asia Minor and Italy and Greece until, in his old age, his head would be struck from his shoulders by a Roman sword. Was there any prescience in Jesus, as he looked towards those low-lying hills, debouching upon the Mediterranean, that one day millions of men and women along its shores, and millions of men and women everywhere in a world whose extent was unknown to him, would bow their heads when his name was uttered?

If he turned away from the blue waters to look south to Samaria, the great valley of Jezreel, lying under Gilboa, spread itself before him. In the east, and near to Nazareth, he could see the round, green hill of Mount Tabor, and far beyond this, in Transjordania, the yellow mountains of Gilead. 'Go up into Gilead and take balm, O Virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured. The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, and they are fallen both together.' Jesus, whose memory was long and retentive, must have recalled Jeremiah's words as he looked towards Gilead. Sentences from the prophets would often come to his lips as he climbed up the green hills of Nazareth, for all around him was the history of his people. If he turned abruptly from the prospect of Gilead and looked to the south-west, Mount Carmel, leaning over Haifa, came into his eyes.

How little his country was. Accustomed to reading of journeys on foot, we think of Palestine as a large country, but it is not much larger than Wales. All the towns in which Jesus preached in the first year of his ministry: Capernaum, Bethsaida, Magdala, Tiberias, Cana, Nazareth and Nain, are within a short walking distance of each other. From Dan to Beersheba, from the north to the south, Palestine is only 155 miles, and its breadth, west of the Jordan, is about twenty-three miles in the north and eighty miles in the south. The length of Wales from the Point of Air in Flint, to Barry Island, on the Glamorgan coast, is 136 miles, and its breadth varies from ninety-two miles, between St. David's Head and the English border beyond Crickhowell, to twenty-seven miles between Aberystwyth and Clun Forest in Shropshire. Even the young, untravelled carpenter must often have felt that Israel was one of the littlest countries in the world. But when he surveyed it from the green hills of Galilee, he may have thought it one of the loveliest.

LXXIV

That moment or two of quiet in the green silence above Nazareth was the last we were to enjoy in Palestine. As we drove down the long road that descends to Nazareth, we entered into a noisy world in which the word '*baksheesh*' prevailed. We passed an enclosure into which a jet of water fell from a pipe. This, we were told, was Mary's Well, a statement which is not in accordance with the fact that modern Nazareth is not the Nazareth that Jesus knew. The water lies about a foot deep in this walled enclosure, and those who wish to draw supplies from the pipe must wade through the overflow to secure it. About twenty girls and young women were waiting to fill their pots when we arrived, and each woman, when she had filled her pot, balanced it on her head and went home. This act is immemorial. For thousands of years young girls have come to this place to fill jars with water, and here, perhaps, Mary came to draw water for Joseph's evening meal. Here, perhaps, with the little Jesus clinging to her side, she stopped, as the young women and girls I saw had stopped, to gossip with her friends and neighbours: retailing the small news of the

village or whispering, fearfully, some report of Zealotry. I leant against the wall to watch the water-drawing until I was driven away by *Baksheeshers!* . . .

There is nothing in Nazareth I wish to remember. It seemed to me alien to the mood and nature of its great citizen, to be content to exploit him, but to have no serious interest in his purpose. As I entered the hotel in which I was to sleep, I saw a large poster in the hall, inviting me to 'Come to the Galilee Lido'. The hotel is owned by Germans, and the waitresses were German: charming girls who entertained themselves and, unwittingly, me, by singing part songs in their leisure time in their sitting-room. Sitting on a landing and looking through the window where these girls, so far from their home, were singing in such a pleasing manner, I thought to myself how much nearer to the nature of the Nazarene was this homely scene of innocent pleasure than all the ritualistic clobber in which his memory has been enveloped and smothered. I was at first shocked by the invitation to Come to the Galilee Lido. *That sign in Nazareth!* But it was shocking of me to feel shocked. So far as I am capable of perceiving the mind of Jesus, I feel certain that he would resent the way in which priests, a tribe for whom he had little respect, have tried to make an ecclesiastical museum, conducted on commercial principles, of his home and country. I do not believe for a moment that he would display any displeasure for the Galilee Lido. He had wittily silenced his critics by reminding them when John the Baptist 'came neither eating nor drinking', he was said to have a devil, and that when he, Jesus, came eating and drinking, he was called a wine-bibber and a friend of publicans. Is it likely that he would pay much attention to pious horror at the thought that someone, wishing to lure people to bathe in the Sea of Galilee, had called it a Lido?

We let ourselves be shocked much too often and too easily. There is a form of piety which is merely nagging at neighbours, an incessant and unchanging expression of disapproval. 'We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.' You have merely sniffed your disapproval of everything we do! . . . And, not for the first time, I wondered if I myself was one of these sniffers, and I wonder now whether this book is not one long sniff!

In the evening I left the hotel to walk through the town by myself. There is no point in travel if a man cannot occasionally escape from company. My complaint against ship life is that solitude is hard to obtain. It was the complaint I felt most against soldiering: I had no privacy. I lived, worked, ate, rested, played and slept in a crowd. There were times when I wanted to cry out, 'For God's sake, let me be alone for five minutes!' This craving for privacy, which the Bolshy-minded detest, because, they seem to suppose, it is undemocratic, is a fundamental desire in nearly every living creature. I have seen a soldier suddenly rise from the society of his comrades and walk up a trench and sit by himself in a fire-bay for half an hour or so, merely because he wanted to enjoy the inestimable privilege of being alone. Occasionally, one of my dogs rises and walks away and lies by himself. This too too, 'matey' world, in which everybody is Christian-naming everybody five minutes after introduction, is a world in which there are no reserves, no reticences, no blessed silence and withdrawal, no places in which a man can be by himself and certain that his privacy will not be invaded.

Jesus, who lived much in company, frequently went off by himself. On that last poignant night in Gethsemane, he left the majority of his disciples to 'sit . . . here while I go and pray yonder' with Peter and the two sons of Zebedee; but even their company was more than he could bear, 'and he went a little farther' by himself. His hour was at hand: he wanted its advent alone. He was to be very lonely thereafter, an abused and solitary figure in a crowd of enemies, and he may have longed very deeply for some sign from his friends that they were close at hand. But there was no such sign. Outside in the courtyard, the apostle Peter was angrily denying all acquaintance with him! . . .

As I came out of the hotel, a young man, with that appearance of a starving student that I had noted so many times along the shores of the Mediterranean, appealed to me in tones of desperation, to buy a Bible, bound in carved olive-wood. It was a poor thing, badly printed on poor paper, and the carving was machined. The word 'Jerusalem' had been stamped unfirmly on the front cover. As I glanced at it, I thought to myself how contemptuous Joseph and Jesus, both skilled crafts-

men, would have been of this shoddy stuff which was being vended in their town, famous for its accomplished carpenters, and vended, too, in the name of Jesus. But I bought some of the Bibles, for I could not bear the hungry look in the vendor's eyes. After he had departed I walked under a cluster of stars and let myself be lapped by the silence, which was only broken at intervals by the trickle of water and little nocturnal noises in crevices and trees. Tall, dark cypresses stood still and erect like sentinels about the hills that enfold the town. The air was full of fragrant flowers, and in my mind I could hear a tolerant voice saying, 'Peace, be still!'

LXXV

In the morning we saw the sights. On every spot that could, by fair means or foul, be identified with the Holy Family, an ornate church had been erected; and so we were to find it everywhere we went, until at last, in Jerusalem, we came upon such a commercialisation of religion that even the devoutest among us felt spiritually sick. We were shown relics that made impossible demands upon our credulity. This was the actual spot! . . . That was the actual scene! . . . Listening to fantastic tales, uttered in a Rotarian voice, I wondered that no one had thought of finding the actual shavings that fell from Joseph's bench, shavings that Jesus himself had made as he planed a ploughshare. Any competent manufacturer of relics could easily furnish a collection of monks with a heap of miraculous shavings . . . perhaps even a cure or two! . . . We were led into the Church of the Annunciation which is built over the alleged site of Joseph's house and asked to descend some steps into the cellar in which he and Mary and their seven children lived. In this natural grotto, we were assured, the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary her impending and mysterious maternity. A column marks the place where Gabriel stood when he made the Annunciation to Mary, and a fragment of red granite hanging from the ceiling is above the spot where Mary stood to receive the message. This fragment was formerly supposed to have miraculous powers. On a rock inside this grotto stood Mary's house, but it is no longer there; for Angels, according to a fifteenth century legend, transported

it from Nazareth to Loretto, near Ancona, in Italy, to prevent its desecration by Moslems. A number of mercenary infants followed us into the church, and I felt one of them plucking at my sleeve. 'Mister, mister,' he said, 'I will guide you!' and without waiting for permission began his rigmarole. 'This is the home of the Holy Family. This is where Mary! . . .'

'Go away,' I said, and almost swore at him. He was not at all abashed, but turned to a lady. 'I will guide you,' he said to her. 'This is where the Holy Family lived. This is where Mary! . . .'

In the street these boys came clamouring round us. 'Mister, mister,' they cried, 'we guided you this morning. Yes, mister, we took you to where the Angel told Mary! . . . *Baksheesh, baksheesh!*'

We were shown the workshop! . . . We were lugged from church to church, each sect asserting its right to some exploitable relic of the Holy Family. (I came away from Palestine with pride in the fact that no Protestant Church takes any part in this mongering.) A service was being held in the Greek Catholic Church which stands, it is said, on the site of the synagogue in which Jesus read the scripture to his townspeople who 'wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth', but soon lost their tempers with him when, a few minutes later, he began to tell them that God was as good to foreigners as he was to Israelites, and sometimes better. 'And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.' (Luke iv. 28-29.) This passage has caused a great deal of bewilderment among Biblical students for there is no place answerable to that description at Nazareth. Its hills are not precipitous, and a man could not be flung over the edge of one of them so that he could be killed by the fall. It has been suggested that a tall platform, from which criminals could be hurled far enough to cause their death, stood on one of these hills, but that is speculation.

A service was being held in the Greek Catholic Church when I entered it, and priests in gorgeous golden robes, looking remarkably like pictures of High Priests in the big illustrated

Bible on which I was brought up, chanted psalms amid candles. A layman came from the congregation and read aloud. Censers were swung, and clouds of incense rose up to the roof while an elaborate ritual was performed! . . . What would Jesus think of all this if he could come to life and see what priests have done to his home? Would he be filled with rage or would he, smiling wryly, murmur, 'Well, well, the children must still have their toys'? But need the children hawk their toys, pretending to piety when they are hoping for profit?

Walking in a street in Nazareth later in the day I saw, standing close to Mary's Well, the only good-looking woman I saw in Palestine. She was standing outside a doorway, wearing a robe that became her slender form uncommonly well, and in her arms she held a child in a blue dress. The comparison was too easy and I wondered to myself, 'Is she posing for tourists?' That air of abstraction and disinterest excited my suspicion. She and her baby were too obviously like the pictures of the Virgin and Child. I called Dr. Frank Easton's attention to her, and 'I must photograph her!' he said. She came out of her abstraction at his approach, and consented readily to be photographed, but scarcely had the picture been taken than her husband and a brood of her brats, who had been lurking inside the doorway, came running out of the house with extended palms, crying, 'Baksheesh! Baksheesh!' Dr. Easton had given her ample money for her effort in standing to be photographed, but she demanded more. I have a copy of the photograph. Inside the doorway one of the woman's children can be plainly seen, lurking! . . . It may be said that people who permit themselves to be exploited have no right to complain of the exploiters, but that is a poor argument and one which, heaven may well be thanked, obtains no credence in the courts of law. The folly of the exploited does not excuse the sin of the exploiters. That good-looking woman in Nazareth debased her beauty for *baksheesh*. She did worse than that, she debased her baby for *baksheesh*. Her husband and she had taught their children to be beggars and whiners and professional cadgers. When I see these Arabs, whether they be Christians or Moslems, displaying some of that pride which is, sentimentalists continually assure me, the badge of all their

tribe, I shall begin to believe in their nobility and their power to rule over Israel.

It was in Nazareth that Jesus, according to Luke (iii. 52) 'increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man', a statement which must cause some trouble to those who believe him to have been a part of the Godhead; for how can God in any circumstances 'increase in wisdom'? He is all wisdom and is incapable of increase. In that white town under green hills he received a vision of the world that has yet to be fulfilled.

LXXXVI

We crossed the fertile plain of Esdraelon, first looking down from a hill on a Jewish village, which is called Balfouria because the late Lord (then Mr.) Balfour announced that we were willing to regard Palestine as a National Home for the Jews. We were bound for Jerusalem, and our journey took us through 'a city called Nain', where Jesus, as he entered the gate, encountered a funeral procession, the burial of a young man, 'the only son of his mother, and she was a widow', and Jesus according to Luke, raised the boy from the dead. Luke is an irritatingly vague author, losing his sense of direction very easily. This chapter (vii.) is so loosely written that the reader may pardonably suppose that the house of Simon was in Nain, and that it was in this town that the woman anointed the feet of Jesus with ointment from an alabaster box. But Matthew (xxvi. 7) places the house of Simon, whom he describes as a leper, in Bethany, sixty miles south of Nain, where Mark (xiv. 3) also places it. John reports another incident with ointment in Bethany, but it occurred in the house of Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary; and it was Mary, the dreamy one, who anointed the feet of Jesus with spikenard and wiped them with her hair.

We did not stop at Nain, but drove on past Mount Gilboa into Samaria. On that mountain King Saul, after he had been heavily defeated by the Philistines and had lost his three sons, Abinadab, Jonathan and Melchuishuam, slew himself by falling on his sword. The Philistines hung their decapitated bodies on the walls of Beth-Shan, a village a mile or two west of the

Jordan, but some decent-minded 'valiant men' in Jabesh-gilead, which is about ten miles east of the Jordan, crossed the river by night and brought away the bodies which they cremated. 'And they took their bones and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.' We halted in Samaria, a country which was dangerous to Galileans and Judeans in ancient times, but has scarcely any of its fiery inhabitants left in these times; they have almost died out because of the difficulty they have in propagating their species. Some difference of race separates them from their co-religionists among the Jews, and they find it hard to obtain wives. This dwindling people, once terrifying in Palestine, are now a little dying group in the city of Nablus, once called Shechem or Sychar; and here they perform intensely their lonely ceremonials, a service, so to speak, for the dying.

We stopped outside Shechem to see Jacob's Well, and here, a little temerariously, for I had been told terrifying tales since my departure from Damascus of the infected quality of Palestinian water, I took a sip of the very cold water which a priest drew up a hundred feet in a very small bucket. The well, it seems, was dug by Jacob, and on its edge, Jesus, according to the charming story told in John's Gospel, talked to the easy-natured, loose-living Samaritan woman who went hurrying to Shechem to tell her neighbours to 'come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did'. John asserts what, I fear, is an embellishment of his own, that she added to this request, the question, 'Is this not the Christ?' though why she should suppose that a stranger who knew enough of her intimate affairs to be able to tell her that she had had five husbands and was now living with a man to whom she was not married, was the Christ, the Deliverer whose advent had long been prophesied and was daily anticipated, is hard to understand. As she ran along the road towards the town she must have been visible to Jesus for almost the whole of the distance. While he was talking to her, his disciples, who had gone into the town to buy meat, returned 'and marvelled that he talked with the woman', as indeed she herself had marvelled, but not because of her loose way of living. She felt astonishment at finding a Jew ready to talk to a Samaritan. That, apparently, was the cause of the disciples' astonishment. They, however, must

have done some talking with Samaritans in Shechem; for they could hardly have obtained meat if they had gone into the town in an arrogant and unfriendly manner. The Shechemites were so moved by the graciousness of Jesus that they begged him to stay in their town, and he remained for two days.

I found this place pleasant. It seemed in some odd way to have retained some of the grace that was shown to the Samaritan woman at the well. The scene was quiet. Even the *Bak-sheeshers* were subdued by its silence and serenity. They begged, but not blatantly. Writing about it now, almost five months later, I find myself able to recall the scene, to visualise easily the peace in which it was enveloped. There, in my mind's eye, is the well, and standing beside it is the undemonstrative priest, a kindly-looking, quiet man, who winds up the little bucket of cold water and, without a word, but with a child-like grace of manner, invites the traveller to drink. Outside I see the road rambling to Shechem, and if I look hard enough I can see the woman herself, hurrying to summon her neighbours to 'come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did'. The little story is full of the extraordinary serenity of Jesus, the lovely tolerance of the lapsed which suffused his life. He could rage with great violence against priests and ritualists, although he was himself punctilious about some observances, but he seems never to have raged against sinners, such as this Samaritan woman. Almost instinctively he took sides with them against the respectable people, the conventional observers of the rules and regulations, and he had a remarkable gift for eliciting their respect and confidence. They confided in him because they felt at once that they could trust him, that he would be quick to see their point of view, that he would give them sympathy rather than reproof, that he would never draw away from them.

Mr. H. G. Wells, in his confession of faith, *First and Last Things*, asserts, a little oddly it seems to me, 'that this great and very definite personality in the hearts and imaginations of mankind,' Jesus, 'does not and never has attracted me. . . . I do not find myself able to associate Him in any way with the emotion of Salvation.' The picture of Jesus commonly presented to mankind by priests, repels him or, at best, leaves him entirely uninterested: 'To me,' he says, 'the Christian Christ

seems not so much a humanized God as an incomprehensibly sinless being neither God nor man:

‘His sinlessness wears his incarnation like a fancy dress, all his white self unchanged. He had no petty weaknesses. Now the essential trouble of my life is its petty weaknesses. If I am to have that love, that sense of understanding fellowship, which is, I conceive, the peculiar magic and merit of this idea of a personal Saviour, then I need someone quite other than this image of virtue, this terrible and incomprehensible Galilean with his crown of thorns, his blood-stained hands and feet. I cannot love him any more than I can love a man upon the rack. Even in the face of torments I do not think I should feel a need for him.’

Mr. Wells then describes how he loved the idea of Oliver Goldsmith in his youth, how profoundly that likeable and apparently clumsy-minded man appealed to him because of the very facts which made smarty-smarty Boswell and smarty-smarty Garrick deride him. Boswell, who was considerably more of a fool than he imagined Goldsmith to be, and had not the sense to perceive sufficiently how witty a woman his wife was, may have been jealous of Johnson’s regard for Goldsmith, but that jealously should not have blinded him to the fundamental good sense and social perception of Goldsmith. It would have been better for us if England had heard with apprehension Oliver Goldsmith’s plea for the rural population. That seemingly silly fellow knew better than the intellectuals of his time what was wrong with his country. Mr. Wells’s confession of affection for Goldsmith makes his failure to feel affection for Jesus the more difficult to understand. He seems to think, not of the goodness of Jesus, but of the goody-goodness in which pietistic people have invested him:

‘When I think of that youthful feeling for Goldsmith, I know what I need in a personal Saviour, as a troglodyte who has seen a candle can imagine the sun. But the Christian Christ in none of his three characteristic phases, neither as the magic babe (from whom I am cut off by the wanton and indecent purity of the Immaculate Conception), nor as the white-robed, spotless miracle-worker, nor as the fierce unreal torment of the cross, comes close to my soul....’

I interrupt the quotation to remark that Mr. Wells seems here not to understand the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception,

and to be confusing it with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth; and since this, I found during my Journey, is a confusion into which many people have fallen, I think it well to say that the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is the doctrine that Jesus was born of a Virgin, whereas the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is the doctrine that Mary herself was immaculately conceived by her mother Anne. If it was dishonouring to the Son of God that he should issue from a womb which had been conceived in the ordinary process of generation, was not that dishonour as much present in the fact that Anne was conceived in sin as it would have been if Mary had been so conceived? Are not these doctrines of miraculous origin, apart from their suspicious resemblance to similar doctrines in pagan religions, destructive of the virtue of the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Atonement? If God became Man so that he might atone to himself for man's lapse from grace, he must, as the creed puts it, have become very man of very man, otherwise he was not entirely man. A god who professes to become a man and yet remains a god is, so to speak, obtaining the worship of man under false pretences; for he claims that by himself becoming man he has proved to man that man can overcome his nature and surmount sin. But if god is not entirely man as man is, the proof is not forthcoming, and man may rightly contend that what is possible to a god masquerading as a man is not possible to a man who is totally and entirely man.

But I must let Mr. Wells continue:

‘... I do not understand the Agony in the Garden; to me it is like a scene from a play in an unknown tongue. The last cry of despair is the one human touch, discordant with the rest of the story. One cry of despair does not suffice. The Christian's Christ is too fine for me, not incarnate enough, not flesh enough, not earth enough. He was never foolish and hot-eared and inarticulate, never vain, he never forgot things, nor tangled his miracles. I could love him I think more easily if the dead had not risen and if he had lain in peace in his sepulchre instead of coming back more en-haloed and whiter than ever, as a postscript to his own tragedy. ...’

I can agree with Mr. Wells in his refusal to believe in ‘the Christian's Christ’, or, perhaps, I had better put it in ‘some Christians' Christ’, but I must blame him for writing as if ‘the

Christian's Christ', as he is described in that passage, is the Jesus of the Gospels, who was as human and liable to hot ears as Mr. Wells himself. The hymn which describes him as 'gentle Jesus, meek and mild', is grotesquely inapt. There never was a man less meek and mild than Jesus. He was arrogant and bold. He set himself against the authorities, to the dismay of his relatives, and was often unjust to the Pharisees, who were not, as most of us have been brought up to believe, bad men, but merely narrow, ritualistic men who quite sincerely were horrified by the things Jesus said and did. He was sometimes rude to his host, as he was to Simon the Pharisee (Luke vii. 44-47) when he complained of insufficient hospitality. He tangled his miracles more than once. The cynicism and disbelief of his fellow-townsmen in Nazareth had the effect of thwarting his ability to work cures. 'And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them' (Mark vi. 5). He was vehement and impulsive and vituperative.

Mr. Wells, even in those moments when he is picturesquely abusive, is too fine, not incarnate enough, not flesh enough, not sufficiently earthy to call an Archbishop a dirty dog or a Dean and Chapter a collection of rapscallions and crooks. But Jesus called the High Priest offensive names, and regularly referred to the Pharisees and Scribes as hypocrites and vipers. I cannot see Mr. Wells, even at his most apocalyptic, addressing the Church Congress in anything like the terms used by Jesus, according to Matthew xxiii. 13-36, in a terrific, almost hysterical, denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees. He accuses them of hypocrisy, of devouring widows' houses, of making long prayers in pretence, and of being blind guides who mislead the faithful. He calls them 'fools and blind' and charges them with straining at gnats and swallowing camels. He calls them whited sepulchres, 'which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.' 'Ye serpents,' and we can almost see him shaking his fist at them as he shouts his denunciation, 'ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?' There is not much that is 'gentle Jesus, meek and mild' and cool-eared about that!

The whole of the passage from *First and Last Things* is a confession of Mr. Wells's ignorance of Jesus — he shows more knowledge of him in his *Outline History of the World* — and I am puzzled to understand some of his expressions. What does he mean by 'the fierce, unreal torment of the cross'. It was *real* enough. Death by crucifixion was the cruellest death anyone could suffer. The condemned man died a lingering death from hunger and thirst and exposure to the intense heat of the sun. He had to endure the pain of the nails in his hands and feet, if he was fixed to the cross in that way, or the constriction of ropes if he was tied to it. He might even have to bear the unspeakable horror of having his flesh devoured by carrion birds while he was still alive! . . .

How, finally, does Mr. Wells reconcile his fanciful picture of a Jesus who never lost his temper with the purging of the temple?

LXXVII

We reached Jerusalem late in the evening, and I lodged that night in the Monastery of Notre Dame de France in Sulieman Street, where I was comfortably housed. The country through which we had passed was hard looking land, and we had driven over long steep roads that led past innumerable bare and stony hills and mountains, very brutal in appearance, and the little terraced fields that lay among the stones. I felt some of that depression that travellers in Palestine, I learn, often feel as they come up from Nazareth to Jerusalem, so singularly called the Holy City. How amazingly well the scenery fits the story of Jesus. I became aware of its aptness in Galilee, but more aware as I travelled to Jerusalem. Mr. Morton remarks on it in his book, but I do not think my consciousness of this intimate relationship between the country and the tragedy of its greatest son was the result of his suggestion. I have met people who have not read *In the Steps of the Master* or who had visited Palestine before it was written, who have felt this extraordinary feeling that the country itself is a scenic account of Christ's tragedy. Those producers of plays who try to make the scenery reflect the mood of the play have derived their doctrine from Palestine. The gentleness and grace of the first happy months at Capernaum are reflected in the green and gentle

hills of Galilee. That kindness and serenity seem to be enhanced by the distant white head of Hermon, wisely prevailing over the whole scene. There is scarcely any anger in Jesus at Capernaum. His goodness has not yet enraged the wicked. Even the devils whom he expelled from the possessed recognised his virtue, nor did they insult him as they departed. Capernaum has vanished from the earth, and there are left to mark the place where it was only a heap of broken stones and a ricketty pier: but the air of serenity is round the spot, the fragrance of those happy months remains. It grows fainter as the traveller approaches Jerusalem. The hard and unrelenting hills that rise up into black, foreboding and unmerciful mountains, appear to the traveller like great black judges with their minds made up to condemn. 'You have been accused, therefore you are guilty. Death!'

As we turned a corner of a climbing road, the chauffeur turned to me and said in casual tones, 'That's Jerusalem!' and looking ahead I saw the Holy City. But I felt no such emotion as I had experienced when I saw the Sea of Galilee blue through green hills, because, perhaps, I felt tired. The day had been long and the heat was strong enough to wear out a man used to a temperate zone. A sense of disappointment was beginning to pervade me. All those Arabs, all those churches exploiting piety, all that *baksheeshery!* . . . That night, after I had dined at the Hotel Fast, to which I was to remove in the morning, I walked down the street to the Jaffa Gate, where I stood in the crowd and tried to feel like a native. A boy came and offered to take me to see the Wailing Wall, and when I declined his services, he said, 'Well, *baksheesh*, then!' His clothes were good, and his appearance gave no sign of poverty, but he had *baksheesh* in his blood. These Arabs automatically put out their hands and whine. They make the streets they inhabit terrible, not with banners, but with beggars. As the Arab infant enters the world its extended hand is the first part of it to appear! . . .

The scene at the Jaffa Gate was like a Saturday night in the East End, in a street near the Docks, so various were the people in the crowd. Here, as elsewhere that I went in Palestine, I was struck by the scarcity of Jews. Occasionally Orthodox Jews, easily recognised because of the curls on their cheeks,

passed by, looking like lay preachers on their way to or from a meeting. A father and his son would go by, talking earnestly. They had that air of having been to a conference which is inseparable from solemn and humourless people. Among these Orthodox Jews were youths with curls sprouting from beneath their bowler hats — hats that appeared utterly incongruous and absurd as the bowler hat worn by the Emperor of Ethiopia — and I wondered where I had seen their earnest and neurotic-looking like before, until I remembered that I must have seen such youths, curl-less, indeed, but equally priggish, emerging from the London School of Economics where they had listened too long to Professor H. J. Laski, and had lost their sense of humour while listening.

These are formalists, learned in the tables of the law, and prompt to repeat rules and regulations. Like drill-sergeants, they can rattle off the contents of the drill-book, but if they were asked a question to which the drill-book provides no answer, they would, I suspect, again like drill-sergeants, be stumped. They passed through the crowd, in it, but not of it, going without any deviation or vagary straight to their destination. They had come out to learn the rules; they had learnt them; and were now returning to their home to repeat them. I walked through the Gate, and presently found myself passing a police station with a light in a blue lamp outside its door. I remembered the Commercial Road! . . . I wandered along the street, and saw two priests, darkly dressed, disappearing up an alley. They might have been on their way to the High Priest's house, an offender to be judged and condemned, a Sabbath-breaker, perhaps, a man who dined with publicans and sinners and forgot to perform ritual washings, one who failed to observe punctiliously the rules and regulations. 'He is a good man. He says you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbour as yourself! . . .' 'Yes, yes, but he breaks the rules and is rude to the upper classes, and does not wash his hands before meat. He is casual about phylacteries. He does not take off his shoes when he enters the mosque. He forgets to say the Rosary. He swallows a cup of tea before he takes the Eucharist. He rides a bicycle on Sunday! . . .'

A belated camel or two padded wearily home. Two Arabs.

each in a brown burnous, each up from the country, each looking as yokel-ish as agricultural labourers from the Cotswolds would seem in Whitechapel Road on Saturday night, gazed delightedly at the sights. They stopped in the middle of the road, entranced by the sight in a shop window of a camel carved in wood. It was as high as a foal. They looked and laughed, their teeth seeming extraordinarily white against their dark skins, and swayed together and slapped their knees. Never in their lives had those Arabs seen anything so droll as that camel in a window. They could not look at it enough. They pointed it out to each other, and began sentences of comment that were interrupted by laughter. Oh, ho, ho, here was something to relate at home: a camel carved in wood and standing in a shop window, a marvellous brown beast, as like a camel as a photograph is like a man! . . . I envied them their street, so free from charging cars that a man could laugh his fill in the middle of it, if that was his wish, and I wondered, too, at their jollity: *they were the first Orientals I had seen laughing heartily since I had come East.* I had begun to believe that Orientals never laugh and seldom smile, but these Arabs were rocking with laughter in the middle of the street, unselfconsciously, without restraint, and so infectious was their laughter that I went up to the shop window and looked at the camel and laughed, too.

A boy came down the street, balancing a tray of flat loaves, like baps or large scones, on his head. The Arabs saw him, and darted across the street to bargain with him for his bread. Each of them took a bap and fingered it, pressing their thumbs almost through the thin crust, and as they fingered the baps they bargained. The boy would not reduce his price: they would not increase their offer. They replaced the baps on the tray, and then took them down again and fingered them some more. But the boy continued to be obdurate. So did they. The baps, now much the worse for wear, went back finally on the tray, and the boy, not in the least upset by the way his bread had been handled, trotted off. The Arabs went on to see the sights, but not until they had had another laugh at the wooden camel.

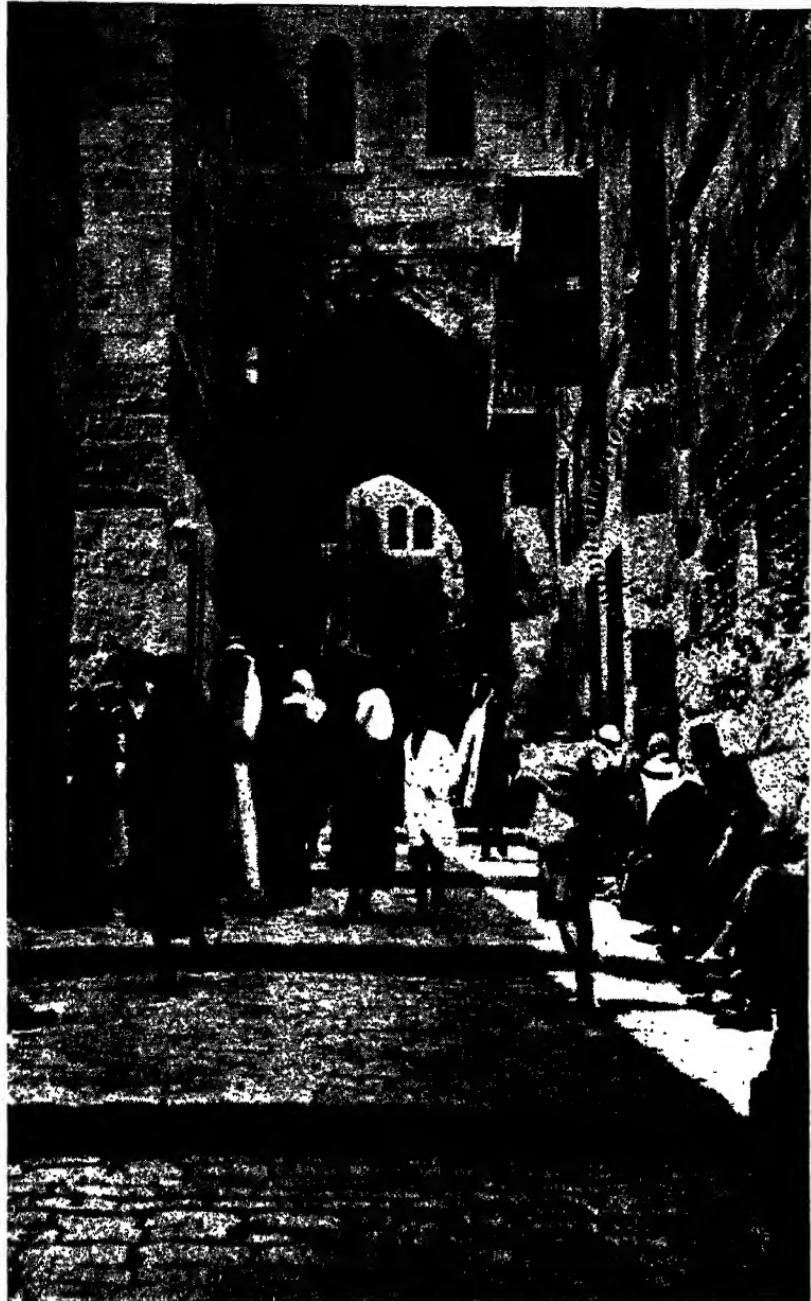
I came back to the Jaffa Gate, and gazed up the Bethlehem Road into velvety darkness that was broken here and there by

a lonely lamp. The night life of Jerusalem, odorous and many coloured, swirled about me for an hour. Through these streets the little band of Galilean artisans and fishermen fled into the darkness that led to Bethany that last appalling week of Jesus' life, fled, too, more terribly when, their hopes abolished, not deferred, they saw him taken from Gethsemane and ran in terror so fast that some of them were never seen again. Did they ever, before the tragedy culminated, stop artlessly to look in windows and smile at the odd and foolish things shopkeepers expose for sale? They must sometimes have bargained with a boy for baps. Did Jesus ever stop to look at sweetmeats on a slab and turn to Judas with the purse and ask him to buy one! . . .

I came away from the Jaffa Gate and walked up to Sulieman Street to the Monastery of Notre Dame de France, and stood for a few moments at the door. Had I gone on I should have come to the Damascus Gate and to Herod's Gate, between which is the entrance to Solomon's Quarries, and then to the Jericho Road where, turning a corner of the city walls, I should have come to Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives and the road that leads to Bethany. Down that road, every night that week, Jesus and his Disciples fled.

LXXVIII

In the morning, as I came out of the Monastery of Notre Dame de France, I saw a priest in canonicals, setting out accompanied by acolytes. A little later in the morning I saw them again. They were leading a funeral procession. I stood in front of a shop to watch it, and the shopkeeper came out and told me the history of the dead Armenian Christian boy whose body, lying in a shallow open coffin, was being carried past us. A man carried the lid. Except for his face, the boy was covered with flowers. It was on such a procession as this that Jesus came that day at Nain when he raised the widow's only son from his bier. This little lad, the shopkeeper told me, was seven years old, and had been ill for two days. Such a sudden death. 'Like that!' he said, snapping his fingers. 'Two days! . . . Ah, ah!' and he lifted his hands in



A STREET IN JERUSALEM
From a photograph by R. MacAlpine Woods

a gesture of despair to heaven. What a thing is man that he should be snapped out so quickly and so easily. We should be harder to kill.

The cortège passed on and I listened to a guide who told me that the place on which I was now standing was the very spot where General Allenby had stood on December 11, 1917, to proclaim the expulsion of the Turks from Palestine. Allenby had walked into Jerusalem by the Jaffa Gate, without any display of military force, partly to fulfil an ancient prophecy that the deliverer should enter on foot and without arms, partly to show respect for the Holy City where the Prince of Peace had died. It would not be seemly to come clattering up these streets with guns and rifles and swords. How different said the guide, was his entry from that of the ex-Kaiser, who had had a special entrance made for him. A wall had been pulled down and a moat filled in, so that he might enter Jerusalem.

Allenby's proclamation, in English, French, Italian, Arabic and Hebrew, was read from the top of the Citadel steps, and it was in these words:

'To the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Blessed and the people dwelling in the vicinity. The defeat inflicted upon the Turks by the troops under my command has resulted in the occupation of your city by my forces. I therefore here and now proclaim it to be under martial law, under which form of administration it will remain so long as military considerations make it necessary. However, lest any of you should be alarmed by reason of your experience at the hands of the enemy who has retired, I hereby inform you that it is my desire that every person should pursue his lawful business without fear or interruption.

'Furthermore, since your City is regarded with affection by the adherents of three of the great religions of mankind, and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of multitudes of devout people of these three religions for many centuries, therefore do I make known to you that every sacred building, monument, holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer, of whatsoever form of the three religions, will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred.'

There were men in our party who had fought on this front.

They were young men then, but now are middle-aged and grey, and even those of them who came unharmed through the War and thought themselves lucky to have escaped all wounding, discover that they spent more of their energy than they imagined, and that they cannot now do, without great discomfort, what men of their years might reasonably expect to be able to do with ease. I read in *The Times* of the death of men of fifty or thereabouts who suddenly cockled up and died. No one, themselves least of all, knew how weakened they had been by the War. They were robbed of part of their young manhood and have now been robbed of their old age.

I listened to old soldiers reciting to each other their experiences. 'Our camp was over there! . . .' Mr. Henry Nevinson, the war correspondent, who is an academic pacifist, once confessed to me that he liked soldiers. 'I suppose I oughtn't to,' he said, 'but I do.' So do I. They stirred my pulses when I was a boy so much that I would rise up early in the morning, an act I loathed even then, to see them disembark in Belfast, and would march by the side of a column from Belfast to Hollywood, loving every soldier in it; and even to-day, battered and ageing though I am, I would follow a column of soldiers again. I listen to bitter-tongued people deriding and denouncing them, and I wonder why they find nothing to admire in men who, whether they be hired or free, have offered to die, if there be any need, for their country. Great nonsense is written and said about soldiering, both by those who praise it and those who hate it; but the soldier remains the servant who is willing to lose his life for those he serves, and even the worst of us must somehow be ennobled when we fall into that mood.

LXXXIX

Jerusalem is Christianity's worst advertisement: a terrible anti-climax. It swarms with beggars and cadgers and whiners of every sort, from Arab *baksheeshers* down to priests. In the very Sepulchre itself sits a begging priest! . . .

We went first to the place where the Temple stood, where now stands the beautiful Mosque called the Dome of the Rock, in the centre of which is a large and sinister outcrop of naked

rock on which, it is said, Abraham bound Isaac for sacrifice.¹ That story is unfinished. I have often wondered what Isaac said to Abraham when he was unbound and released. It cannot have been complimentary. Abraham cuts a poor figure in the Bible, a cowardly and superstitious old ruffian, who palmed off his wife as his sister — she was his half-sister — for he was incestuous as well as superstitious and cowardly: a mean man to be the father of Israel. That the Jews should reverence this man and despise Jesus is a poor testimony to their intelligence. He conspired with Sarah that they should pass, not as husband and wife, but as brother and sister, so that if the lust of Abimelech, the king of Gerar, should be stirred by the sight of Sarah's beauty, there should be no danger of Abraham being murdered because the king, though he had no scruples about committing murder, might have scruples about committing adultery. It was one thing to take Sarah, married to Abraham, to his bed, and another thing to take Sarah, widowed.

This mean and cowardly pretence was maintained by Abraham and his wife, and almost involved Abimelech and his people in disaster through the vengeance of God; but Abimelech remonstrated with the Almighty, and succeeded in convincing Him that He was proposing to commit a very great injustice. This story (Genesis xx.) is one of the most curious in the Old Testament, and involves the reader in a grave doubt, not only of God's justice, but of God's wisdom. Abimelech did not know that Sarah was Abraham's wife, nor, although he had taken her into his house, had he yet had connexion with her, yet God came to him in a dream and told him that he was 'but a dead man, for the woman thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife'. It was then that Abimelech argued with him, and got the better of the argument. He told the Almighty that he had taken Sarah 'in the integrity of my heart' and that in 'the innocence of my hands have I done this'. The husband and wife had solemnly assured him that they were brother and sister. To this defence God made the very queer reply, 'Yes, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.'

¹ Another legend asserts that the sacrifice was attempted on a site in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The customary relics are there exhibited.

It was a very Abrahamic idea of God to believe Him capable of destroying an innocent man and heavily punishing His people for an offence of which He knew him to be innocent, to destroy him, too, in the interests of such a man as Abraham who had led Abimelech into temptation and was not to be punished for his shabby act. Abraham was a very poor creature, with little about him that calls for admiration, and is only worth retaining in the Christian lore because he proves that God can demonstrate Himself even in the meanest of men. We shall do wrong to God and to ourselves if we believe him to be the sort of god Abraham admired. *That* god was only the projection of Abraham's own mean, greedy and grossly superstitious character.

The sinister rock has many legends attached to it, all of them equally grotesque. It 'is believed to hover over the waters of the flood and to be the centre of the world, the gate of hell, the scene of the sacrifice of Isaac and much else of a fantastic nature. According to Moslem belief it was from the rock that Mohammed was translated to heaven on the back of al-Burak, his magic steed of the human face.'¹ David bought the site of which this terrible, black-looking rock is part, and around it was eventually built the Temple which, after various vicissitudes, became the place where Jesus confounded Christian pacifists by using force when he drove the cattle dealers, dove and pigeon dealers, and money-changers out of the precincts.

Christian pacifists are inclined to belittle those who consider that force may legitimately be used by Christians, either offensively or defensively, but the grounds of their belittlement are exceedingly shallow; and they profess to find less importance in the violent Purging of the Temple than in a text or two in the Sermon on the Mount. But when Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount, he was at the beginning of his ministry, new from baptism and the wilderness, and with little experience of life. He had spent almost his entire time in Nazareth, being a father to his brothers and sisters, and Nazareth was remote from the main currents of affairs in his country. He was more cut off from the mass of his countrymen than a young

¹ *The Handbook of Palestine and Trans-Jordan.* Edited by Sir Harry Luke and Edward Keith-Roach, with Introduction by Lt.-General Sir Arthur Wauchope and the Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert Samuel (p. 119).

carpenter is in the mountains of Connemara or the Outer Hebrides or the middle of Wales; for he has newspapers and the wireless to bring him into some contact with the world around him. The Jesus who said, 'I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain' – the Jesus who said that was a very different man from the Jesus who, eighteen months or three years later,¹ went into the Temple and in circumstances of the greatest deliberation and calmness of mind, not only drove the merchants out of the Temple, where they were exercising by permission of the ecclesiastical authorities, a useful function for pilgrims, no graver than that of selling candles and pious pamphlets in a Christian church but, according to the Fourth Gospel, scourged them out, inciting those present in the precincts to beat them and fling away their wares.

It is a significant fact that the injunction to turn the other cheek to the smiter, which appears in the summary report of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew and Luke, is not mentioned in Mark, who makes no report of the Sermon: a curious omission when we remember that Mark is believed to have drawn his Gospel from the lips of Peter himself. It is odd that Peter, who was present on the Mount when the Sermon is said to have been delivered, should not have mentioned it to Mark, and odder still that, if doctrine so explicit as that contained in the Sermon was expounded, Peter should have forgotten it, though perhaps the fact that he was a man of quick temper and prompt in the use of swords, as we learn from the story of his assault on Malchus in the Garden of Gethsemane, may contain an explanation of his failure to recall this instruction in pacifism. How deliberate the Purging was may be gathered from the fact that when Jesus had come into the Temple, and had surveyed the scene, he sat down and made himself a scourge of small cords. There was time for him to think over his intentions while he was knotting the cords or to listen to objections from his followers, if any were made, so the Purge was not due to a sudden impulse. The deliberation with which

¹ The time for which his ministry lasted is a subject of dispute.

he acted is clear from the fact that he could hardly have driven the traders out of the Temple unless he had had the support of a substantial number of the people present in the precincts at the time; and that their support and sympathy had to be enlisted. The enlistment must have taken some time and persuasion; not much, perhaps, but enough, when added to the time spent in making the scourge, to have enabled him to reconsider his intentions. If ever a man coolly contemplated and performed an act of force amounting to violence, Jesus was that man. According to the Fourth Gospel Jesus himself applied the scourge to the traders, beating them out of the Temple; but even if he did not actually beat them, merely menacing them, he used the scourge as an emblem of force which might be used: as much a sign of force to be used in certain circumstances as a policeman's baton.

In the Sermon itself (Matthew v. 21-22) he said to his audience, 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother *without a cause* shall be in danger of the judgment. . . .'

The Thirty-seventh Article of Religion is fully justified by the authority of its Master, given in that supreme week of his life when he had come to his greatest and gravest conclusion, in saying that 'it is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars'. Dr. Hensley Henson, the erudite Bishop of Durham, in a letter published in *The Times* of April 25, 1936, complains that the familiar English version of the Thirty-seventh Article omits a word which appears in the Latin version, a word 'which does appear to me to go to the root of the moral issue:

'and, since the Latin and the English versions are equally authentical, we are entitled to assume that they carry the same meaning. The Latin runs thus: -

"Christianis licet, ex mandato magistratus, arma portare, et justa bella administrare."

'Unfortunately the English version omits the crucial word "justa", making thus unlimited an obligation which, in the official Anglican Confession, is morally conditioned. Bishop Burnet's comment runs thus: -

"When it is visible that a war is unjust, certainly no man of conscience can serve in it, unless it be in the defensive part; for no man can owe that to his prince to go and murder other persons at his command, yet he may owe it to his country to assist towards its preservation, from being overrun even by those whom his prince has provoked by making war on them unjustly. For even in such a war, though it is unlawful to serve in the attacks that are made on others, it is still lawful for the people of every nation to defend themselves against foreigners."

'Every man must decide for himself whether a war is, or is not, "just", and, of course, he must follow his conscience at all hazards. Nevertheless, the leaders of religion are bound to emphasize the duty which the Article affirms, and I apprehend that there can be few considering men who would not agree that, in the present state of the world, "just wars" are but too likely to break out. Would any maintain that a Christian citizen ought to refuse to serve in a war waged by his country in defence of international good faith and elementary justice? Does Christianity require the desertion of the Abyssinians? Does it entitle Mussolini to claim from Great Britain acquiescence in his immense crime? Personally, I cannot think so. I do not doubt that the policy stated by the Prime Minister with characteristic moderation and unique authority, and admirably maintained in circumstances of great difficulty by Mr. Eden at Geneva, can be justified on Christian principles and commands the approval of the general conscience. I hold, therefore, that it is the quite evident duty of English Christians to support the Government in whatever efforts and sacrifices that policy may involve. To do this will in many cases imply enlisting in his Majesty's Forces. Soldiers have played a great part in Christian history, and they have yet a great part to play. Pacifism in the present state of the world seems to me little less than a sacrifice of Christian principle to humanitarian sentiment. It is not for nothing that the cross is the symbol of Christ's religion.'¹

If Jesus 'increased in wisdom and stature', as Luke says, we may believe that he knew his mind and his purpose far better when he strode into the Temple in that great and noble rage than when, after his emergence from the wilderness, in a state of emotional excitement after long fasting, he preached the Sermon. A singular variety of experiences had formed his mind since those happy days in Capernaum when he was

¹ Dr. Henson amplifies his argument in his remarkable book of Gifford Lectures, *Christian Morality: Natural, Developing and Final*.

immensely popular with the crowd, and he had come to a decision that men before him, and men since him, have had to make: namely, that if his purpose were to be fulfilled he must somehow shake the mass of people out of their apathy, shocking them into belief, and that this shocking could best be done by himself dying.¹

I am deeply stirred by the events of that last week, moved to a discipleship which I cannot feel when I contemplate the clutter of ecclesiasticism in which his memory has been smothered. He made his own decision, consulting not at all or only in the most obscure manner, his own Disciples; and as he walked across those hard hills in the burning sun, exhibiting a physical endurance that is astounding when we remember how quickly he died on the Cross, an endurance which is often displayed by men of poor physique but iron will, he realised beyond a peradventure what he had to do: he must make such a demonstration as would never die out of man's memory. In this mood, deliberate, cool, resolved and with the manifestation, but not with the reality, of rage, he entered the Temple, taking the first excuse for a vehement act that presented itself to him, and flung the traders into the street. In this way he challenged the authorities, in this way he brought about his quickening and redeeming death.

LXXX

I sat on a wall outside the Mosque, and while I sat there a young Arab woman carrying an infant came wailing to me. The child in her arms began to whimper, and I realised as clearly as if I had caught her in the act that she was pinching it. I shook my head at her, and she wailed away from me to other people. The child ceased to whimper as she left me, but whimpered again as she came up with the visitors to whom she was now wailing. A lady came and sat near me. The wailing Arab went to her and again, as she approached, the baby whimpered. What a Madonna! . . .

¹ Klausner (p.313) thinks this is improbable, but his reasons for his disbelief are not convincing.

LXXXI

We walked about the site of the Temple, climbing on to the Walls to survey the surrounding scene, or descending into Solomon's Stables. From the Walls, we could see the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives, and many ornate tombs. This one was buried there, and that one in that tomb over there! . . . Intense disappointment began to fill my thoughts. I had not come to see this bazaar of fantastic belief, this ecclesiastical circus, this rag and bone shop. I had come to see the place where Jesus Christ had lived and taught and died. Now, more than ever, I felt the terrible poignancy of Mary Magdalene's cry, 'They have taken away the body of my Lord and I know not where they have laid him.' I had come for a glimpse of paradise: I had been given a peepshow, full of contending relic-mongers. Jerusalem is in great need of a purge more violent than that of the Temple.

We left the Temple, and were taken to the Church of the Sisters of Zion to see the place where Pilate exposed Jesus to the crowd, crying, 'Behold the man!' An Arab Christian, who guarded the entrance, forbade a girl in our party to enter the church because her arms were bare. She was told to stand back, and it was not until a man in the party, remembering, perhaps, Sir Walter Raleigh, took off his coat and put it on her that she was allowed to go in. Eventually, so many women were there with bare arms because of the heat, the attendant, poor fellow, despaired of regulating them and let them in without protest; but I thought to myself how cross Jesus would have been about that foolish ban on a woman's bare arms or bare head. I could imagine him rounding on the priests and church functionaries who should seek to prohibit a woman from a devout act because she had unintentionally infringed some footling rule or regulation which ought never to have been made.

It galled me to see this profusion of priests and priestcraft everywhere; for Jesus seldom had a good word to say for them or it. He did not call a single priest when he chose his Twelve Disciples, yet to-day priests are scrabbling in the earth of his country to find marketable relics of his life and death, and

fighting with each other for the right to show this bit of bone or that bit of robe, and are exhibiting sites as sanctified in cynical disregard of the fact that more than one is claimed as the scene of a single event. 'Come to the Copts for the best relics of Christ!' 'The Roman Catholics have all the best sites!' 'The Greeks give good value to pilgrims.' 'Our souvenirs of the Holy Family cannot be surpassed! . . .'

As I stood in front of the High Altar in the Church of the Condemnation, looking at the place under the archway where Jesus is said to have stood in bonds, while Pilate cried, '*Ecco Homo*', I felt intensely aware of his solitude, and that sense increased as I came out of the Church and began to climb up the Via Dolorosa or Street of Pain, which is marked with Stations of the Cross and notices warning visitors to beware of pick-pockets. In some of the shops I saw exposed for sale Crowns of Thorns! . . .

The final scene was extraordinarily swift in its events. From the moment of arrest in Gethsemane to the moment of death on Calvary was less than a round of the sun, and most of the events were performed in the dark.

He was seized very late at night, after he had come into Jerusalem from Bethany, about three miles to the east, whither he and his Disciples had fled from the priests. They had come to celebrate the Seder or Feast of the Passover which had to be done in Jerusalem itself, and could not be done in Bethany. The unleavened bread, *Mazzoth* or 'bread of affliction', and bitter herbs had to be eaten at night, at the hour of sunset, and on Thursday morning Jesus had sent two of his Disciples ahead of him to make arrangements for a room in which they could hold the Feast. That night they ate the unleavened bread, and while it was being eaten, Jesus, in a mood of depression, spoke sorrowfully to them about himself, bewildering them greatly with his words. He instituted the Last Supper, begging his Disciples to eat the bread and drink the wine regularly in remembrance of him, and this Supper, for some odd priestly reason, has been turned into a matutinal service, a sort of breakfast. The bread was ceremoniously broken with his fingers and not with a knife, and, speaking the ritual prayers, as he broke and distributed it, Jesus gave it to his Disciples. At the end of the meal they sang a hymn, the *Hallel*, which may

have been Psalm 136 or any of the Psalms 113-118. How long they sat at supper we can only surmise, an hour or two, but when the supper and the discourse were ended, the little band, oppressed by fear and foreboding and the leave-taking of Jesus, and aware that he might at any moment be arrested, walked in the darkness to the top of the Mount of Olives, a ridge about 200 feet high, at the extreme eastern end of the city, beyond the Kedron, on the road to Bethany; and here they spent part of the night in talk together, until Jesus, nervously unable to stay still, moved nearer to Jerusalem, descending to the Garden of Gethsemane, where he remained a long time in agony and prayer. It was here that he was arrested.

Events, which had hitherto been leisurely, now began to move with extraordinary speed. If the Feast of the Passover was not to be profaned, the execution of Jesus, on which the priests were set, must take place at once, and so, observing some formality of trial, his captors and accusers hurried him first, we are told in St. John's Gospel, to the house of Annas, who had been high priest, where he was subjected to a preliminary examination. There is a great deal of dispute about the hours during which the trial took place. Mark and Matthew say that it occurred during the night, but Luke says it was held in the morning. The point would not seem material were it not for the fact that it was illegal to try capital cases at night. Klausner, however, asserts that the Sanhedrin at this time was composed of Sadducees who did not recognise the rule about such trials.

From the house of Annas, Jesus was hurried to the house of Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas, who, having catechised him, sent him to the Praetorium, the official residence of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, by whom, according to Luke, he was dispatched to the house of Herod Antipas,¹ with whom Pilate had recently composed a quarrel, and who was then present in Jerusalem. Herod as swiftly sent him back to Pilate. Each of these eminent authorities was eager to evade responsibility for a death which two of them, Annas and Caiaphas, sincerely enough desired, but the final responsibility

¹ This reference to Herod occurs only in Luke's Gospel, and is denounced by Guignebert in *Jesus* (p. 467) as one whose 'futility does him scant credit. It is a piece of pure hagiography'.

for it rightly fell on Pilate, the Emperor's immediate representative, and it was he who gave him over to be crucified. The stories in the Gospels are discrepant, though no more discrepant than the stories of the Spanish insurrection told by reporters in a great hurry. They were gathered long after the events from lips that had grown old and memories that were fading, and we may wonder, not at the discrepancies between them, but at the similarity.

When I try to visualise the events I find myself recurring again and again to the loneliness of the prisoner. The Synoptists lead us to believe that there was not a friendly face in any house where he was examined. Wherever he looked, in the house of Annas or Caiaphas, he saw antipathetic eyes or eyes that were full of fear and hatred. In the imperial palaces he was surrounded by bored and indifferent or cynically inquisitive officials, all of them contemptuous of him and his people, including Annas and Caiaphas, as conquerors usually are of the conquered people over whom they rule. An Anglo-Indian is not more aware of his superiority to an Indian fakir than Pontius Pilate was of his superiority to the half-naked Galilean who had been dragged before him in the small hours of the morning.

There is a legend that Joseph of Arimathea, who was a member of the Sanhedrin, and other Jews who were inclined to sympathise with Jesus, were present in one or both of the high priests' houses, but there is no support for it in the Gospels, a fact, however, which does not dismay the Jews, who claim that the Gospels were written to placate Romans and vilify Jews. St. John asserts that one of the Disciples, and we may justly suppose him to be referring to himself, who 'was known to the high priest... went in with Jesus to the palace of the high priest', but his presence in that place has, singularly, escaped the notice of the Synoptists and we may pardonably believe that he was willing to glorify himself by proclaiming his fidelity to his Master to the last moment of his life, even when Peter was standing outside in the courtyard denying all knowledge of Jesus. I find it hard to give credit to St. John's account of his own actions: it places him in too favourable a light and leaves the rest of the Disciples in even greater disrepute than they are placed by the Synoptists.

He gives details of the trial, however, which could not have been invented, and were either seen by him or reported to him by a witness; and one of these details is extraordinarily vivid, illuminating the whole scene. Jesus, who is reported by the Synoptists to have remained silent throughout the greater part of the examination, appears in the Fourth Gospel as a spirited prisoner. He makes bold replies to Annas. His doctrine, he declared, was always plainly proclaimed, 'and in silence have I said nothing:

'Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.'

These spirited answers to the high priest enraged a policeman or warder who was standing by. (Fancy talking like that to the Archbishop of Canterbury! . . .) And he leant forward and struck Jesus 'with the palm of his hand, saying "Answerest thou the high priest so?"' That is all we know of this respectable policeman, but it is more than enough. We may believe that he was sincerely shocked by the insignificant Galilean's saucy rejoinders to so eminent and influential a man as Annas, and that the blow was delivered as naturally and as righteously as any blows that were ever struck, although we know that the High Priest was unpopular and that popular songs of the time were full of references to the brutality of his constables; but the story of this act reveals very clearly in what atmosphere the prisoner was tried. An unarmed man, bound and defenceless, and without a friend or a counsellor in the court, was struck by a policeman, who was not rebuked for his offence.

I conceive of the fellow as spiritually waxed-moustached, a well-fed sergeant of police, a little thick about the neck and liable to die of apoplexy, who makes the most of his brief authority. That day, no doubt, when he was free of his court duties and the condemned man was hanging on the cross, he went home to supper with his wife and children and told them how he had ticked that preaching Galilean off, and put him in his place. 'Spoke saucy to the 'Igh Priest, 'e did, so I slapped 'is face for 'im!'

'You was right, dear!'

'I should say I was right! Saucy 'ound! I learned 'im, I did, and the 'Igh Priest took a bit of notice of me, too! Nodded

to me, 'e did as we come out of the court. "Good mornin', sir," I says to 'im, an' 'e says, "Ah, good mornin', sergeant!"'

"That's right, dear. You keep in with the 'igh up ones! . . ."

"Yes, not 'alf I will. Fancy that saucy 'ound saucin' the 'Igh Priest. I mean to say, what's the world comin' to? He looked a bit took aback when I 'it 'im."

"Did 'e, dear?"

"Ye-es! Do you know what 'e said to me? "I never done you no 'arm," 'e says. "Wot you 'ittin' me for?" Somethink like that! . . . Well, 'e's got what was comin' to 'im. 'E's 'alf dead by now! Is my supper ready?"

"Yes, dear. 'Ere it is. Now draw up to the table an' 'ave it while it's 'ot!"

And he draws up to the table murmuring 'Saucy 'ound!' and 'as it while it's 'ot! This innominate policeman lives for ever in the memory of mankind as one who slapped the Saviour in the face.

Jesus was bolder than Paul on a similar occasion. 'If I have spoken evil,' he said to the policeman, 'bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?' Paul was abashed when, having spoken sharply to Ananias, the high priest, who had 'commanded them that stood by to smite him on the mouth', he was asked by the policeman, 'Revilest thou God's high priest?' 'I wist not, brethren,' said Paul, 'that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.'

LXXXII

By the time Annas had done with Jesus, dawn was approaching. Outside in the cold air of the morning Peter was warming himself by a brazier of coals. A damsels, akin to Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off in Gethsemane, accused him of being a Disciple, but Peter swore three times that he knew not the man. That was at cockcrow. It was thereafter that Jesus was taken to Caiaphas, to Pilate, to Herod, if he was ever taken to Herod, and back again to Pilate, who then, reluctantly, condemned him to death. Up this street of pain, the Via Dolorosa, he staggered from Fort Antonia and then down to

the valley in which Calvary stood, carrying the *patibulum*, or heavy cross beam which would be fixed to an upright post so that he might be tied to it. He had been brutally beaten in the cells beneath the Praetorium, with whips or *flagella*, made of strips of leather, whose thongs were interspersed with pieces of metal, so that his body was covered with raw wounds and bleeding weals. On these naked sores, gnats and flies would settle to feast when the victim, unable to brush them away, even if he had the strength to do so, was tied to the cross. Up that long, steep, twisting street he staggered, half blinded with sweat and blood, half dead already with pain.

He was, perhaps, an emaciated man, as Messiahs commonly were, but he was wiry, as a young countryman, accustomed to an active life, might well be, and could, no doubt, in normal circumstances have carried the *patibulum* easily enough. He must often have carried beams as heavy in Nazareth. Otto Borchert speculates interestingly and, I think, convincingly, on the physique of Jesus in his book, *The Original Jesus*. 'Jesus was an active and vigorous walker,' he says, and describes the length and nature of some of his journeys on foot. 'We can also,' he continues, 'reckon the physical exertion of which Jesus was capable if we take another of His journeys:

'I refer to His last ascent from Jericho to Jerusalem. This is a distance which takes about six hours walking, the road rising during that time to a height of over 3,000 feet. It is without shade, leading through solitary, rocky country. At the beginning of the day came the healing of the blind man in Jericho (Mark x. 46), and the journey was made in company with the crowd of excited caravans going up to the feast. And yet that same evening, without trace of weariness, Jesus was present at a banquet in His honour among the circle of His friends from Bethany. (John xii. 1-2; cf. xii. 12.)'

But even *his* strength was insufficient for that journey along the road to Calvary. It was part of the law affecting condemned criminals that they should carry the *patibulum* themselves, but tradition affirms, and we may believe truly affirms, that Jesus was unable to carry it the whole length of that dolorous street, and that after he had fallen the first time an African called Simon of Cyrene, was impressed by the soldiers to help him to carry it.

The first fall was at the third Station: at the fourth Station, according to a legend which seems to have no foundation in fact, he met his mother; and at the fifth Station Simon took hold of the *patibulum*. Kindly women were accustomed to offer anodynes to condemned men as they walked to their crucifixion, but Jesus was too dazed with pain to take their anaesthetic potions. One woman named Veronica, however, wiped the blood and sweat from his face at the sixth Station, the legends say, and the imprint of his features was left on her handkerchief, which is now, Baedeker cynically remarks, 'shown as a sacred relic in several European churches'. He came out of Jerusalem at the seventh Station, and here his second fall occurred. When he had reached the eighth Station, he gazed at the weeping women who were following him, according to Luke, and bade them weep not for him, but for themselves and their children. But Luke, the young Greek physician and a friend of Paul, had never seen Jesus, and took his account of the life from sources that were probably sentimentalised by the time he was able to investigate them. It seems improbable that Jesus, who had been most brutally scourged and was so faint that he could not carry his *patibulum*, had strength enough to give even a brief address to the crowd. The Via Dolorosa officially ends at the eighth Station, but tradition carries it six Stations further. At the ninth Station he fell for the third time. The tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and the thirteenth Stations are in the Golgotha chapels of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the fourteenth and last Station is the Sepulchre itself.

Unbearably poignant is this story, and one to fill the heart with high feeling. But what has it to do with all this clutter of ornate churches, this unceasing repetition of ritual acts, this continual clamant cry from priest and beggar of *Baksheesh!* *Baksheesh!* . . .

We, who had not been beaten, who had no cross to carry, who had our health and strength and were free from pain and the prospect of imminent and cruel death, found that street toilsome and fatiguing. We were profoundly glad to go back to our hotels to lunch and rest. We had followed the guides through the heat, stopping at each Station to listen to a trite remark, 'This is where Jesus fell the first time!' 'This is where he fell the second time' and glancing suspiciously at onlookers

when a voice cried sharply, 'look out for pickpockets', and we were very tired. We turned gladly home to refresh ourselves.

LXXXIII

There is a discrepancy between Mark's account and John's, of the hour at which the Crucifixion began, but it seems that by three o'clock on Friday afternoon, Jesus was dead; an unusually quick death, for many that were condemned lasted for two or even three days. From the time of his arrest until the time of his death was fifteen hours at the outside. Unless, therefore, Mary was living in Jerusalem at the time, she could not possibly have received news of his arrest and have travelled from Nazareth to Jerusalem in less than a week, by which time he had not only been executed but, it is said, had risen again from the dead. There is no warrant in the New Testament for any belief that she may have been living in Jerusalem in the last week of her son's life. If she were living in Jerusalem, it is odd that he did not visit her, but went always to Bethany or slept out on the hills around Jerusalem. But odder still is the fact that *there is no record of his appearance to her after his resurrection*. He remained on earth, the Gospels tell us, for forty days, and appeared to many people, over five hundred, as Paul tells us (1 Corinthians xv. 5-8), but not once did he appear to his mother and his own family. Is not this strange? Surely a loving and devoted son would have appeared first to her? She was present, we are told, at the first meeting of the Disciples in Jerusalem after the Ascension, but no deference appears to have been paid to her, nor was she treated with any particular favour. She was present, we are informed, and that is all. She is not mentioned again. Paul does not make a single reference to her in the whole of his epistles. We are not told in the Scriptures what became of her after that meeting in the upper room, nor do we know where or when she died. She passes out of the story in a complete silence. The whole doctrine of her virginity, of her mother's immaculate conception, of her devotion to her son, of his devotion to her, and of the adoration that was due to her because of her maternity, receives little or no support from the scriptures. It is the invention of priests.

LXXXIV

In the afternoon we drove to Bethlehem, the royal city of David, which is about five miles south of Jerusalem. Here, according to Matthew and Luke, but not according to Mark, Jesus was born. Exegetes and scholars, as a body, doubt or disbelieve the Matthean and Lucean statements, which, they suggest, were made to fit the prophecy of Micah (vi). The Messiah was to be born in the royal city, therefore, these two Synoptists, Matthew and Luke, said that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem. None of the Gospels was written until about thirty or forty years after the date of the Crucifixion, and the information given in them was collected long after the events, not from documents such as any biographer to-day easily obtains, but from hearsay, from the oral recollections of ageing artisans, and from collections of sayings which have not survived in documentary form. We do not know for certain who was the author of the first Gospel, Matthew, the tax-collector of Caper-naum who was called to be one of the first apostles, or another man of the same name. His name may have been used as a kind of guarantee, as was often the custom, by the real author, who, being unknown or unimportant, sought to give value to his work by attaching to it a venerated name. Luke never saw Jesus, and was profoundly influenced by Paul. Mark comes nearest to being authoritative because he is thought to have taken down the reminiscences of Peter, then an old man, and to have transcribed them. He may even have known Jesus.

How little value we may attach to many 'facts' of Jesus' life is evident when we realise that we know neither the exact date of his birth nor of his death. Our ignorance of the date of his death is acknowledged in the fact that Good Friday and Easter Sunday are movable feasts, but it is less widely realised that the date of the birth, Christmas Day, is purely conjectural. A Roman Catholic Priest, a Frenchman, the Very Rev. Denis Buzy, D.D. says,¹ 'It must be admitted that we have no real certainty regarding the day, the month, or even the year of Our Lord's birth at Bethlehem.' Father Buzy might have

¹ *The Life of St. John the Baptist.* Translated into English by the Rev. M. T. Barton, D.D. (London. Burns, Oates and Washbourne Ltd.) p. 25.

added that there is no real certainty that he was born in Bethlehem, and that he was probably born in Nazareth, although some scholars think that he may have been born in a village called Bethlehem, about half-way between Haifa and Nazareth and a two hours' journey from the latter, in the Plain of Esdraelon. This Bethlehem is now a German colony. 'But there is no sound basis for this hypothesis,' says Klausner.

In the royal city, however, there appears to be no shadow of a doubt in the minds of the ecclesiastics or the tradesmen, terms which are almost tautological in Palestine, that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. The names of the streets signify as much. I walked through Manger Street and Grotto Square, where I was besought by a young man to buy 'Stars of Bethlehem - three a shilling!' and afterwards entered the Church of the Nativity which has a very low door, so low that even I, who am not tall, had to stoop to pass through it. Its lowness, I learned, is to prevent asses and camels from entering, though why these patient beasts should be forbidden to go where, according to legend, cattle were stalled when Jesus was born is a thing that may be comprehensible to priests, but is not crystal clear to me.

The Church is shared by several sects, Orthodox, Latin, Armenian, Jacobite, Abyssinian, and Coptic, and the stable, a grotto or cave under the choir, is reached by descent down two flights of steps. It is lit by thirty-two lamps. The stable is ornately decorated, having a marble pavement and walls of masonry, lined with marble. In a recess is an altar, round which fifteen lamps continually burn, and on the ground under the altar is an inlaid silver star. 'On that spot,' said the guide pointing to the star, 'Jesus was born.' The star is inscribed:

Jesus Christus natus est hic de Virgine Maria.

Turning away from the altar of the Nativity, we saw a second recess, reached by three steps down, where, we were informed stood the manger in which the infant was laid immediately after his birth. It is now in a church in Rome! Near by are chapels, one of which is the place where Joseph was warned by an angel to flee to Egypt with his wife and her son, and the other the scene of a massacre by order of Herod of infants to whose parents no such warning was given.

I came away from Bethlehem too tired to go to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem with the rest of the party, but Mr. Peter Lunn, the son of Mr. Arnold Lunn and grandson of Sir Henry, kindly volunteered to take me to it early on the following morning. Poor Lady Margaret Watney, who had gone to the Sepulchre that evening, tripped over a piece of projecting stone on the pavement outside the Church, and broke one of her thighs. She was taken to hospital and there remained throughout most of the time of trouble in the following late spring and summer. In my hotel that evening, I met an amusing girl of fifteen, Miss Margaret Hindmarsh, who had been sent on our cruise for her health. She looked tired and bored. 'I suppose you've seen everything?' I said. 'Oh, yes,' she replied wearily, '*everything!*' 'Have you been to Bethlehem?' 'I expect so,' she said.

LXXXV

I rose early the next morning. Bells of every sort were ringing for the dawn, and I heard a great noise of twittering birds. By seven o'clock, and before we had had breakfast, Mr. Lunn and Miss Marjorie Fleming and I were in the Sepulchre. At that hour the city was cool, but by eight the heat was intense. Three services were being held when we entered the Church, a fact which I found fascinating rather than repellent, as it appears to be to many people; for I felt impressed at finding three sects uniting to celebrate the memory of one person, even if they could not agree about the way in which it should be celebrated. This unity, however, is not very deep: it does not extend to the repairs that the Church requires. Each sect is fearful of letting any other sect undertake repairs, lest it should establish some proprietorial right in the church; and the sects cannot combine to do the repairs jointly. It is for this reason that the paint is peeling off the dome. Had not the Mandatory Government shored up the church with metal scaffold poles and struts, the whole front of the structure might now be level with the street. We came away from the Church, intending to return a little later when the services were ended, and went to the place where the Abyssinian monks are quartered. Mr. Lunn was reluctant to go into their quarter because, he

had heard, they resented the flow of visitors they have received since Mr. H. V. Morton re-discovered them and reported his discovery in his book; but we could see no reluctance on the part of two of the black monks to be approached and, after a little hesitation, we entered and were civilly received. The hour of our entrance, however, was too soon for us to be shown any more than the courtyard, and so, finding our way back to the Church of the Sepulchre by steps which led down from the Abyssinian monks' courtyard to the Church itself, we left them.

The services, except for a mass in a Roman Catholic chapel, were over when we returned, and we were able to wander about the Church without disturbing worshippers. It is supposed to cover the site of Calvary and the Tomb, an assertion about which there has been a vast amount of dispute, springing chiefly from the fact that Calvary was said to have been outside the city, whereas to-day it is well inside it. Mrs. Alexander, the wife of a former Archbishop of Armagh, a charming old lady whom I once saw in my boyhood in Belfast, might, if she were alive, feel tempted to recast the first two lines of her famous hymn:

‘There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.’

There is no green hill now, nor is the site on which it is supposed to have stood, ‘without a city wall’. The memorial-mongers have razed the hill and replaced it with ornate masonry. I shall not inflict on my readers the arguments for supposing that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands on what was once Golgotha. It will be enough now to say that there is dispute, and that there can never be certainty. General Gordon denied that the Church site is the true one, and discovered a tomb outside the city which more plausibly corresponds to the descriptions in the New Testament, but the preponderance of opinion appears to be in favour of the Church site, and there is an extremely able argument in its favour by the late Major-General Sir Chester W. Wilson, entitled *Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre*, which brings the debatable subject as near to decision

as it is ever likely to be brought. Sir Charles bases his argument on the natural growth of any great city. What was outside a city yesterday may be well within it to-day. Mr. Alexander's hymn was long misunderstood by me in my boyhood. I took the line, 'Without a city wall' to mean that the green hill far away had *no* city wall. I did not discover for several years that 'without' in her hymn meant 'outside'.

The interior of the Church is dark, a priestly device, no doubt, for exciting awe in the devout, but a device that has no relation to the life of Jesus, which was spent in the sunlight and open air. There is scarcely any reference to cold in the story of his evangelism, although the night air of Jerusalem, a city set high on hills, is often cold; and one sustains almost a shock on reading that Peter had to warm himself at the brazier while Jesus was being examined in the house of the High Priest. Why have the priests in Jerusalem done precisely the opposite of what Jesus did? He founded no church, yet they have cluttered almost every place he visited with contending churches. He lived in the open, but they have made their churches dark and stuffy. He broke rules, but they have made many. He dwelt on the spirit, but they dwell on forms. He respected the law, but was not overruled by it; they respect nothing but the law. His mind was incapable of intellectual and metaphysical complexities. He had the simplicity and directness of the saint, and was more akin to St. Francis of Assisi than to dialectical doctors, such as Augustine and Aquinas, but was infinitely saner than any of them. He knew nothing of grotesque doctrines, such as those of the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Birth, or the Triune God, and would, I believe, have been infuriated had he realised how priests would twist his simple service of recollection, the Last Supper, into the monstrous doctrine of the Mass, with its cannibalistic eating and drinking.

There is little in the religious emblems of Jerusalem which is not alien to the life and spirit of Jesus, and it is the feeling that the priests have turned the Holy City into an ecclesiastical Old Clo' shop which fills the layman's heart with despair when he sees it. The actuarial precision with which spots are identified as the scene of this or that event in the life of Jesus when it is plain to the most credulous mind that such identification is

impossible, does not create, but destroys, faith; and I caught sight of people glancing at each other uneasily or with a smile as they listened to some guide or priest informing them of fantastic assumptions as if they were irrefutable and transparent facts. I came away from the churches of Jerusalem with much of the reverence that Galilee had roused in me running rapidly out. The veracity and value of the Christian religion are not dependent on scenery, nor is our faith in God strengthened by a fine day or shaken by a fog. My belief in the validity of Jesus is neither founded on the gentleness of Galilee nor overthrown by the brutality of Jerusalem. But I had hoped to find some sign of his human nature in the land of his birth, and I found only crowds of ecclesiastics, beggars, and tradesmen. Jesus has vanished from his own country, but the priests and the money-changers in the Temple remain. 'Reliquations,' said a seventeenth century writer, 'are the true bankruptcies of Religion.' The visitor to Jerusalem has difficulty in denying that statement.

Returning from Palestine to London, we paused at Palma, the capital of Majorca, where I went ashore to inquire about the health of Mr. W. B. Yeats, who had been seriously ill, and found him recovering. After I had left him I went into the Cathedral, a remarkable building in the Baroque manner, and was eventually conducted to the Reliquary by the sacristan who showed me round. Here was a piece of a saint's shin, there was a piece of another saint's knuckle, each possessed of curative powers. In a glass case was a small square of white linen, a little less in size than a postage stamp, and close to it a small square, about the same size, of blue linen. The white piece, I was told, was a portion of the robe put upon Jesus by Pontius Pilate, the blue piece a portion of the Virgin Mary's dress. I was shown a thorn, about the length of a darning needle, from the True Crown! . . . I came away feeling derisive though that was not my wish. Why cannot these relic-mongers get out of the way? A world, oppressed by sorrow, turns its tired eyes towards the serene and comforting figure of Jesus but finds him hidden behind ecclesiastical veils. It looks for a man, and is given a myth. Need we feel astounded when we hear that some distracted people trample on the images of God? May we not believe that when they have recovered from their

rage and their sense of being thwarted, they will see the figure of Jesus, no longer bedizened with elaborate ritualistic robes, his mind no longer obscured by ingenious dialectics, but eager as he was in Capernaum, gentle and kind as he was among the green hills of Galilee, noble in his resolve and holy rage as he was in Jerusalem, so full of virtue and persuasion and manly grace that even to touch the hem of his garment was to be healed.

LXXXVI

The Tomb and the True Cross were discovered in the time of Constantine, largely as the result of his mother, Helena's, dreams. We may justly suppose that he would have been a daring fellow who had doubted their validity. When that venerable woman discovered in her sleep precisely where the True Cross had lain for several centuries, and indicated the place to the members of her court, we may feel certain that a cross would be found; even if the carpenters had to work all night to make it. It was a remarkable gibbet. It had the power to renew itself in spite of the wholesale distribution of pieces of it; so that although a multitude of churches each had a piece of the True Cross to show to the credulous, the Cross itself remained intact. Where it is now, however, nobody knows. It is not in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but the visitor is shown the precise spot on which it stood. He is led to the east apse of the Chapel of the Raising of the Cross, the property of the Greeks, and is shown a silver-lined hole in which the *patibulata* or upright beam was inserted. On each side of this spot, at a distance of five feet, are signs to show where the crosses of the two thieves were raised: one, standing to the south, on which the penitent thief was suspended, and the other, to the north, on which his impenitent companion died.

The cleft made in the rock when the veil of the Temple was rent and the earth was shaken and Jesus gave up the ghost is also shown in this Chapel. It is covered with a brass slide. There is a legend that the Cross stood immediately over the grave in which Adam was buried, and that the blood of the Redeemer dripped through this cleft on to Adam's skull and washed away the sin of the world. The first man and second

sinner lay at the Saviour's feet and was purged by his blood. So goes the legend, which does not, however, account for Eve's redemption, although she was the original sinner, but it is too much of a legend even for the Roman Catholic Church, which has rejected it.

Before the visitor reaches the spot where the Cross stood, he is shown the spot where Jesus was nailed to it. The details of the Crucifixion are unknown. Jesus may have been nailed or tied to the gibbet: he may have been raised from the ground or have been hanged in such a manner that his feet were on it. Death was the result, not of the method of exposure, but of the combination of exposure and scourging. It was immaterial to the Romans, therefore, whether they tied or nailed a condemned man to a cross. The act of breaking the hanging criminal's legs or piercing his side with a sword may have been a merciful act, hastening death and relieving the condemned of intense agony, but Guignebert thinks it was an additional cruelty, another example of Roman sadism. 'Nothing could be more horrible,' says Albert Reville in *Jésus de Nazareth*, 'than the sight of this living body, breathing, seeing, hearing, still able to feel, and yet reduced to the state of a corpse by forced immobility and absolute helplessness. We cannot even say that the crucified person writhed in agony, for it was impossible for him to move. Stripped of his clothing, unable even to brush away the flies which fell upon his wounded flesh, already lacerated by the preliminary scourging, exposed to the insults and curses of people who can always find some sickening pleasure in the sight of the tortures of others, a feeling which is increased and not diminished by the sight of pain — the cross represented miserable humanity reduced to the last degree of impotence, suffering and degradation.' But although we do not know the exact details of the Crucifixion, we are certain that Jesus was not crucified in the manner made familiar to us by crucifixes and pictures. The weight even of an emaciated body would have torn it away from the cross, had it been held only by nails. In some pictures of crucifixes, the feet are shown to be resting on a *suppedaneum* or *pedale*, but this support existed only in the imagination of the artists who were trying to reconcile physical facts with the conventional cross. Other artists, better informed about the

gibbets used by the Romans, showed the Saviour supported by a piece of wood under the crutch of his body, but they were not encouraged to portray this crutch, which was often carved by the Romans into an indecent phallic emblem, and was, therefore, outraging to the Christian conscience.

The rapidity with which Jesus died has resulted in a great deal of vague speculation: some finding in it a sign of his feeble physique, others a ground for their belief that he did not die, but fainted, and that he was smuggled away to some place of refuge by Joseph of Arimathea where, eventually, he died. George Moore, in *The Brook Kerith*, supposes him to have survived the crucifixion for a long time and to have lived in monastic seclusion, a disappointed man who had done with redemption for the rest of his life; but other authors imagine his survival after his surreptitious removal from the Tomb by Joseph to have been short. We need not concern ourselves with these fanciful assumptions. It is very probable that Jesus, who had shown immense physical vigour in the last week of his life, as a result, perhaps, of nervous elation, suffered a severe reaction of mind and body after the brutal scourging he had received, and that this scourging, accompanied as it was by his knowledge that all his Disciples had deserted him and that the crowd which had begun by applauding him in the Temple had ended by screaming for his death, caused him to lose his will to live and endure. He drooped on the cross and was glad to die. The great vision seemed to have been shattered. That cry 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' has provoked an enormous amount of ingenious explanation, but ingenuity cannot explain it away. The young Jewish workman, despite his hope that his offer to die for his dream would bring the world to his side, must have felt, in his last agony, that he had lamentably failed in his purpose. The shameful and degrading death to which he had been condemned, a death appointed chiefly for slaves and the lowest criminals, had ended, not in the hosannas of a spiritualised people, but in the brutal mockery of jeering and derisive crowds. Even those whom he had called to his apostolate had fled from him. In his most awful hour, he was deserted and alone. Is there any cause for astonishment, therefore, that his head drooped, and from his lips, relapsing into the Aramaic language

to which his tongue had been bred, there broke that pitiful, despairing cry? It is one thing to anticipate the firing-squad with pride and the assurance of your friends' admiration and love: it is another thing to face it, with none but enemies near, knowing that your friends have fled and your dream has been dispelled. Jesus died in agony, not only of body, but of soul: for he felt that he had failed.

LXXXVII

Close to the spot on which the Cross is said to have stood is the stone on which the body was laid after death and anointed by Nicodemus; and adjacent to this stone is the grave itself: about thirty yards from Calvary. I feel a deep reluctance to put down in print my feelings regarding the Tomb, and I do so because I am recording emotions which were experienced, which have remained, which seem unlikely to depart. I have compared my feelings with those of other people who went to the Tomb, and I find a substantial agreement between us. I was repelled. Stooping to pass through the low doorway, I went into an ornate chamber, in which were many lamps, and imagined for a moment I had come into the cooling chamber of an elaborate and expensive Turkish Bath. Inside the Tomb, a priest sat in expectation of money. When I gave it to him, he sprinkled my hand with rosewater. I felt an intense desire to cry out against this *baksheeshery*, but I held my tongue and backed out of the Tomb as quickly as I could. The Galilean mood was dead in me. Jesus had cried out against the priests, yet here was a priest, with an extended itching palm, in his very grave.

I came away, silent and shattered. There was too much to say, and I dared not say it.

LXXXVIII

Later in the morning, I went to Gethsemane, the most beautiful relic I visited, and found a fine church in the Garden. We were shown the rock on which, we were told, the Disciples slept while Jesus prayed, and outside, in what is left of the

Garden, we saw olive-trees that gave shade and fruit in Jesus' day. Under one of them, he received the cup from the Archangel. It is not possible, Colonel Balfour assured me, for trees to live as long as these olive-trees are supposed to have lasted, but at least they looked seemlier relics of the life than any others I had seen. I was more willing to believe in their veracity than I was to believe in the veracity of anything else that was shown to me. On our way to the Mount of Olives, I stopped at the British Cemetery to see the graves of our soldiers, a lovely memorial to their lives, and here I fell into conversation with the custodian, as English a man as I could have wished to meet. I have forgotten how long he had been in Jerusalem, but it was long enough for him to have had two children, a girl, attending school, and a baby boy, born there. Neither of the children had ever been in England. His wife and he hailed from the same part of Surrey, but which came from Kingston-on-Thames, which from Teddington, I cannot remember. Was it lonely for his wife? I inquired. She never complains, he replied. He had a good job, and a good job is not easily come by! . . .

Sometimes now, reading of the riots in Palestine, I think of that English family, performing its duties without emotional display, and wonder how it has fared. Has the little English girl yet seen England? How will it appear to her when she, born in Jerusalem and acclimatised to great heat, comes home to fields that are green all the year round, green with a great variety of green, where there are no sombre, grey-looking olives, no fig-trees whose fruit has purple flesh, no vines that climb or crawl, no wailing Jews, no Arabs? In a little house, near the road, the family of four remained as English as oaks, and I hope in my heart it has been well with them.

I loitered so long in the British Cemetery, talking to the custodian that when I came out, the party to which I belonged had departed, nor did I catch up with it until I reached the Mount of Olives, a steeper ascent in the heat than I felt inclined to climb. I surveyed the surrounding scene from the foot of the Mount, and awaited the return of those who had climbed to the top. While I was waiting, I saw an Englishman pounding down the road, pursued by a little Arab girl, who was shading her eyes with one hand and extending the other

as she wailed, very loudly, for *baksheesh*. 'What are you doing?' I called to him. 'I'm trying to see if I can outpace this kid!' he replied, as he pounded past. But she ran faster than he could walk. As she returned, rubbing her eyes, I saw that the poor child's eyes were inflamed and sore. She could scarcely see. How long must we wait until these Arabs have learnt the elementary lesson of keeping their infants' eyes clean? Are we to let them rule a neglected land when they cannot even guard their children against preventable ophthalmia, but treat the disease as a providentially-devised excuse for whining for alms? I returned to Jerusalem with two memories, not of Gethsemâne and the Mount of Olives, but of an English child in an alien land, cared for and guarded by a good father and mother, and a little half-blind Arab girl, running furiously along a sunburnt road, shading her sore and discharging eyes from the fierce sun, and shouting as she ran, '*Baksheesh!* *Baksheesh!*' while her parents, dirty beyond belief, lay in the hot dust and waited for the coins she might collect. Does this memory stamp me as smug? Well, then I am smug.

That afternoon, we drove to Bethany to see the Tomb of Lazarus – but by this time I was sick of tombs – and then to the Dead Sea, from which we drove to Jericho and the Jordan. The country was as barren as any I have ever seen, barren as the Syrian desert, and without its beauty. We seemed to pass through miles of bare, brown hills, and bare, grey-green hills, that looked like slag-heaps, until we came to the Dead Sea, a dreary sheet of oily-looking water. Dead land and dead sea! . . . On our way, we passed the tavern or inn to which the Good Samaritan is said to have carried the man who was beaten and robbed by thieves, and here we paused for a moment or two, but much too long for our Arab leader who shouted that there was nothing to see. Nor was there. But tourists will be tourists, and elderly ladies with cameras, seeing a guide going towards the inn and observing that the owner of it came smiling to encourage them, went scurrying towards it. The leader was furious with the guide, the man who had talked of the Straight called Street and told us that Capernaum was the place where Jesus had cured the Sanatorium's daughter, and in his anger slapped him on the hands with his stick. Then followed a long, loud argument, while the innkeeper, who must have

thought that the thieves had returned, endeavoured to make himself intelligible to the elderly women. Yes, yes, he would be photographed, but first he must sell these very good oranges! . . . The driver of my car slipped into the inn to buy food. I had wondered much about the meals these Arab drivers ate. They seemed able to go for hours without food. My driver returned from the inn, carrying a large round flat cake, an enormous, spongy pancake, which he threw on the seat beside me. He sat on it all the way to the Dead Sea and Jericho, which we visited in that order, and I sat on it all the way from Jericho to Jerusalem. What it tasted like when, that night, if ever, he ate it, I dare not imagine.

We descended from our cars at the Dead Sea, in which some members of our party waded, and gazed awhile at its repulsive waters, in which no fish can live. Infinitely desolate, it stretched its sterility towards a shore that was hidden by mist. I came thankfully away. Re-entering our cars, we started for Jericho, and as we drove, we saw flights of storks wheeling beautifully above our heads; hundreds and hundreds of storks advancing and revolving in orderly formations, the only living things, it seemed, in that desolation. I looked at the stricken earth, and saw here and there a curious high bushy tree with unwholesomely bright green leaves 'What is that bush?' I said to the leader of our party, who was now travelling in my car. 'Dead Sea fruit!' he replied. After a while, he spoke again. How, he wondered, had Moses persuaded the Israelites to enter this desolate country. They had come out of Egypt and endured the wilderness, and now they were confronted with this! This was their first view of the Promised Land! . . . I wondered, too, how Moses, himself denied the right to enter, had persuaded them to go. Did they feel badly bilked? Why did they not bolt back to Egypt to the fish which they did eat there freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick. Jericho, just across the Jordan, was a city of palms, as, indeed, it remains, but with what a desert it is surrounded. Had the country changed in these three or four thousand years, as our leader surmised, since Moses went up into Pisgah and died? Was it fertile then, as it is barren now? '

LXXXIX

Returning from the Jordan, over which is suspended the Allenby Bridge, we came upon a wedding party in Jericho. The throng was great, and we stopped to watch part of the ceremony with which the wedding was celebrated. Young men linked arms and danced that shuffling, snake-like dance which seems to be popular all over the Near East. We had seen peasant girls dancing it in Thasos, now we were witnessing it again in Jericho. Presently the bridegroom mounted a superb horse and prepared to ride off to the bride's home in the pretence of snatching a reluctant girl from her parents. But I doubt if she minded being snatched. I dare say she was waiting impatiently for that bold young man on a horse to come and carry her off, and listening eagerly for news from her giggling bridesmaids who, peeping down the road, came hurrying back with tidings of his approach.

We left Jericho, green in the wilderness, and drove back along the road to Jerusalem, exhausted with our day's journey and the great heat. As we passed between the bare hills, we saw two policemen, armed and mounted, on guard in a valley.

Immobile against the grassless earth, they stood sentinel over the civilisation that rises uneasily from that barbaric soil. We saw again the inn whose owner asserts that it is the very inn to which the Good Samaritan, when the priest and the Levite had passed by on the other side, carried the man who fell among thieves and was left half dead on the road on which we were travelling. As we came up to Jerusalem, rising up steep and winding roads, we saw shepherds preparing to watch their flocks by night. The goats and sheep browsed on hills that seemed bare of any grass. We were silent. Slowly the barren hills became suffused with rosy light. The sun was setting, and its soft rays lit up the dead earth and made it seem alive. A lovely silence enveloped the hills. We were at peace. There was Gethsemane, with its ancient, grey olive-trees, and there, on the other side of the road, were the walls of the Temple. How often Jesus and his Disciples must have dropped down from those walls, so that they might hurry through the dusk to the refuge of Bethany. Every inch of this

road was full of agony and aspiration, of love and bloody sweat, of a high dream that was dissolved in a mean death, but yet remained a high dream that must, if we are to live, be soon fulfilled.

I was to have visited the Wailing Wall on Saturday morning, but I was in no mood to watch Jews pushing scraps of paper into crevices in mortar while they wailed for a lost and worthless nationality. So I did not go. That afternoon, I took a train from Jerusalem to Haifa, passing through fertile country to the slopes of Mount Carmel. The contrast between this pleasant, green land and the country round the Dead Sea was immense and incredible. Orange groves were everywhere visible as we pushed north, between Sharon and Samaria, nearly touching Galilee. Over there, somewhere, was Jaffa, and in its suburbs was Tel-Aviv, the city which the Jews have built for their refugees. It had 2,000 Jews in 1918. Now there are 140,000, but no peace. Yet Palestine needs the initiative of the Jew and the endurance of the Arab, if it is to blossom again like a rose. As we came round the corner of Carmel, I remembered that here Elijah the Tishbite, a cunning man who knew how to use petroleum as if it were water, drew down fire from heaven, and the recollection of his feat made a wry thought run through my mind. For across the Mediterranean Sea, beyond Egypt, on the plains of Abyssinia, young men in aeroplanes were raining down fire from heaven at that very moment; bringing the blessings of a progressive civilisation to their backward fellow-Christians.

Our train came slowly and creakingly to a standstill in Haifa, and I descended and made my way to the *Laetitia* which looked like home: a friendly ship with a friendly crew; and as I came round a corner, I heard myself hailed, and looking up, saw Harry Morton waving to me. Mary and he had come out of Asia Minor, rich with information and unharmed, and I was with my friends again.

As we moved away from Haifa, I stood by the side of the ship to look back at Palestine. Somewhere in that earth, the body of the young Jew, Jesus, was laid. It is now dust, and blown upon by all the hot airs of acrimonious doctrine. Yet how easily we might all be reconciled if we could find the soul of that poor young Jew. I had come to this stricken land,

hoping to strengthen my disturbed spirit with his quiet spirit, his peace and good temper, his kindly laughter, his wit, his humour, his affection for simple things and simple people, his divine impatience with fantastic and lifeless laws, his immeasurable love of mankind, and his far, sweet vision, but all I could hear, above the noise of the bazaars and the perpetual repetitions of the priests, was the sorrowful lament of Mary Magdalene, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.'

xc

But it is not in that state of despair that I can end this book. I remember his reply to the lawyer who said, 'Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?'

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'

And on them hang the whole peace and survival of the world.

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